RESEARCHES IN INDIAN EPIGRAPHY AND NUMISMATICS

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SUNDEEP PRAKASHAN
DELHI

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First Published in 1986
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ISBN-81-85055-94-7

State Museum Library
5937
Lucknow

Published by
Swadesh Prasad Singhal
Sundeep Prakashan, C-2/9, Community Centre
Ashok Vihar, Phase II, Delhi (India)-110052

Production Executive
Manjit Singh

Printed in India by
Print India, A-38/2, Phase-I,
Mayapuri, New Delhi-110064

To
my wife
late Shrimati Vidyavati
गृहिणी सचिवः सखी मिथः प्रियवादिनी कल्याणकारिणी
who relieved me of all cares,
throughout her life.

PREFACE

This Volume has arisen out of my prolonged study of Sanskrit inscriptions spread over the last fifty years. While teaching Epigraphy to the M.A. classes at the Punjab University at Lahore, I felt dissatisfied with the readings and translations at several places in Dr. J.F. Fleet's excellent work, Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Volume III. The text sometimes yielded a very awkward sense and I felt convinced that it had not been correctly read. At the same time it was no easy task to find the correct reading and in many cases it has required protracted pondering over the facsimiles. The result was very often thrilling. For instance in line 15 of the Bhitari Pillar inscription of Skandagupta, Fleet had read, *yaṃ prāpayaty=āryyatāṃ* and translated it thus, "whom the bards raise to distinction with (their) songs and praises." Dr. Fleet himself was not satisfied with the reading of the verb as *prāpayati* for he has put a question mark after the doubtful syllable *prā*. To me it appeared quite queer to say that the bards made him a distinguished person. He was great by virtue of his own achievements. He has been rightly styled as 'the sole hero in the Gupta dynasty'. In order to find the true reading, I had to make three trips to Bhitari—two in 1934 and one in 1943. It was at the last visit to the Bhitari Pillar that the inscription revealed the secret. What had all along been read as *prā* was in reality *hre* and the verb was *hrepayati* meaning 'causes to blush'. I conveyed the news to my friend Dr. Vasudeva Sharan Agrawala, who immediately congratulated me saying, "by your reading the meanings are at once illuminated."

Some more corrections have been made in the text of the Bhitari inscription, though these are not so spectacular. Another correction of text which has been made in the Dewai Stone inscription of Bhīmadeva solves the puzzle regarding the name of the king who founded the Śāhi dynasty of Udbhāṇḍapura, commonly known as the Śāhis of Kabul and Panjab.

Another important correction of reading made in the Mandasor inscription of the Guild of Silk-Weavers dated Mālava year 529 has brought out the real meaning and significance of the verse where Fleet had read *priyam*, necessitating the correction of *agryām* into the obscure *aśryām*. I have found *śriyam*, which does not force us to make any change in the clearly engraved *agryām*, and also gives the clear meaning, "the womenfolk do not attain foremost beauty."

I may also invite particular attention of the readers to my new interpretation of the text of the Mankuwar Buddha Image inscription of the reign of Kumāragupta, dated 129. In this short record Fleet had translated the compound *Svamat=āviruddhasya*, as "who had never been refuted in respect of his tenets." This translation had led to the unnecessary inference that upto the Gupta year 129 or A.D. 448, "Buddhamitra was so famous for his learning that no contemporary Brahmin scholar, however eminent, could venture to attack Buddhism." This was due to a misunderstanding regarding the meaning of *aviruddha* which has been properly explained in the Mahāniddesa, as "one whose vices of the mind have been destroyed by the fire of knowledge." This shows how wrong historical conclusions can be avoided by a proper understanding of the text of the inscriptions.

A word about the numismatic notes. Amongst the numerous billon coins bearing the portrait of the couchant bull and the legend Śri Sāmantadeva on one side and a lance-wielding horse-rider on the second, there are some which bear the curious name Khavadayaka or Khvadavayaka, who has been supposed to be a ruler of the Hinduśāhi dynasty, notwithstanding the fact that there is inscribed the word *adal* in Arabic script. No one has given the least consideration to the fact as to why the Arabic word in Arabic script should be found on the coins of a Hindu king even before the advent of the Ghazanvi rule over Kabul and Panjab. Now, we know that the coin-type with the couchant bull and the name of Sāmantadeva was continued by the Muslim rulers from Shihab-ud-din Ghori upto Iltitimish. The Arabic word occurs on the copper coins of Shihab-ud-din, having a standing bull and the Devanāgarī legend on the obverse and the word *adal* on the reverse, and on the billon and copper coin of Iltitimish. It was clear to me that the presence of the word *adal* was a sure indication of its being a coin of this dynasty. The name of Sultan Qutb-ud-din has been written as Khudava Din in the Palam Baoli inscription. This at once, suggested to me that Khvadavayaka was the Indianised form of the full name Qutb-ud-din Aibak.

I feel that the matter included in the pages of this work will be of interest to the students of epigraphy and history of the period to which these inscriptions belong. It is with this object that these studies are being published in one handy volume, so that the inquisitive reader has not to undergo a laborious search for the Journals which may not be easily accessible.

I shall consider my labour amply repaid if this publication leads to a proper comprehension of the inscriptions dealt with.

Lastly I have to perform the pleasant duty of expressing my gratitude to all those who have assisted me in bringing out this publication. First of all I have to thank my son Dr. Ashvini Agrawal, but for whose keen interest and enthusiasm this work would never have been published. Shri Maharajakumar Dr. Raghubir Singh of Sitamau laid me under special obligation by supplying an excellent estampage of the very important Risthal inscription of Prakāśadharmā, predecessor of Yaśodharmā Viṣṇuvardhana. I am deeply obliged to him. Professor Ved Kumari Ghai, Head of the Sanskrit Department, Jammu University, Jammu, my old pupil brought to my notice the Shuddh Mahadeva inscription and supplied me good photograph of the same. I am deeply beholden to her. Shri G.B. Sharma, of the Indian Air Force (now Archaeological Officer, Punjab) brought to me the clay sealing of Śri-Gupta, and permitted me to publish it. I am highly thankful to him.

I express my special obligation to Shri Swadesh Prasad Singhal of Sundeep Prakashan, Delhi, for kindly publishing the work with so much care, in these times of soaring costs of paper and printing.

Vijayā-daśamī
23rd October, 1985

JAGANNATH AGRAWAL

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABORI	Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.
ASI. AR	Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, New Delhi.
ASR	Archaeological Survey Reports by A. Cunningham.
BMC. GD	British Museum Catalogue of the Coin of Gupta Dynasty by John Allan.
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London.
BV	Bhāratiyā Vidyā, Bombay.
CA	Classical Age, ed. R.C. Majumdar & A.D. Pusalkar.
CCGD	Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasties by John Allan, London.
CII	Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum
EI	Epigraphia Indica.
IA	Indian Antiquary, Bombay.
IC	Indian Culture, Calcutta.
IHQ	Indian Historical Quarterly, Calcutta.
JASB	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.
JBORS	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Patna.
JBRS	Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Patna.
JBo. Br. RAS	Journal of the Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay.
JESI	Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India, Dharwar.
JIH	Journal of Indian History, Trivandrum (Formerly Madras).

JNSI	Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, Varanasi.
JOI	Journal of the Oriental Institute, Baroda.
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London.
KURJ	Kurukshetra University Research Journal, Kurukshetra.
M.S.	*Mālava Saṁvat.*
NIA	New Indian Antiquary, Bombay.
PAIOC	Proceedings of the All India Oriental Conference, Poona.
PIHC	Proceedings of Indian History Congress.
Raj.	*Rājataraṅgiṇi* of Kalhaṇa.
Raghv.	*Raghuvaṁśa* of Kālidāsa.
T.S.	*Taittirīya Saṁhitā.*
VIJ	Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal, Hoshiarpur.
V.S.	*Vikrama Saṁvat.*
ZDMG	*Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft.*

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1

VIDISHA STONE PILLAR INSCRIPTION OF THE REIGN OF MAHĀRĀJA BHĀGAVATA, DATED REGNAL YEAR 12*

This inscription is engraved on 'the stump of a column' which was discovered by Mr. H.H. Lake, State Engineer of the erstwhile State of Gwalior, in one of the narrow streets of Vidisha, former Bhilsa, the headquarters of the district of the same name in Madhya Pradesh. Mr. Lake had been deputed by H.H. the Maharaja Scindia to explore the ancient site of Besnagar. "It was lying," writes Mr. Lake, "at the side of the road covered with dust, a very unnoticeable object, but I happened to turn round to look at it again and saw a word in the Mauryan character which decided me at once to have it brought into Camp."[1] The 'stump' is now preserved in the Gujri Mahal Museum, inside the Fort at Gwalior.

This 'stump of a column' is 2 feet 8 inches in height and is octagonal at the base where its girth is 5 feet 7 inches. The writing consists of a single line running across the faces, and covers a length of 4 feet 10 inches. It is more or less well preserved, except that the letters on part of the second and the whole of the third faces containing the name of the donor, have been obliterated. The few lacunae occurring elsewhere can be filled easily.

A transcript of the inscription together with a translation and brief notes prepared by A. Venis, were incorporated by Mr. Lake in his article on 'Besnagar' which was published in the *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 23 (1914) 135-46 The inscription has been noticed by D.R. Bhandarkar in the *Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India for* 1913-14, p. 190, where the transcript of Venis has been reproduced. I happened to notice this pillar in 1963, in the Gujri Mahal Museum and prepared a transcript from the original. On comparing my transcript with that of Venis, I noticed some material differences. I am, therefore editing it here, partly because of the corrections in the reading made by me, but more because I felt that the inscription has not been published in a satisfactory manner. None of the earlier publications were accompanied by a facsimile. I am obliged to the Curator of the Gujri Mahal Museum for supplying me with an estampage which is reproduced here.

**VIJ* III (1965).

The characters belong to the early Brāhmī and show no variation from those of the Aśokan period. As will be shown below, the inscription belongs to the second century B.C.

The language is Prākṛt exhibiting the influence of Sanskrit, for instance, the genitive ends in *-sya* instead of simple *-sa* or *-ssa* ; *cf. Puruṣotamasya*.

The inscription is dated in the 12th regnal year of Mahārāja Bhāgavata, who, as pointed out by D.R. Bhandarkar, is obviously identical with the penultimate king of the Śuṅga dynasty mentioned in the Purāṇas.[2] The *Matsya*, *Vāyu* and *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas* contained the variant Bhāga,[3] which is apparently an abbreviation of the fuller name Bhāgabhadra, which occurs in the well-known Besnagar Pillar Inscription of Heliodoros. We may therefore conclude that the Vidisha and Besnagar pillar inscriptions refer to the reign of one and the same monarch.[4] Mahārāja Bhāgavata, *alias* Bhāgabhadra, ruled from 114 to 82 B.C. The present inscription, which records the setting up of a Garuda flagstaff of Puruṣottama, *i.e.* Viṣṇu, furnishes another piece of evidence of the popularity of the Vaiṣṇava cult during the Śuṅga period, and points to the existence of a second magnificent shrine of Viṣṇu.[5]

TEXT

[6]गोऽतमपुतेन भागवतेन... [भ]गवतो पुरुषोतमस्य[7] गरुडध्वज[:]* कारितो [द्वा]दसवसा-
[8]भिसिते भागवते म[हाराजे] [॥]*

TRANSLATION

"The Garuḍa flagstaff of the Lord Puruṣottama was caused to be made by ... a worshipper of Viṣṇu (and) son of Gautama, (when) Mahārāja Bhāgavata had been anointed for 12 years."

Notes and References

1. *J. Bo. Br. RAS*, 23 (1914) 144.
2. The *Viṣṇu* and the *Bhāgavata*, *Purāṇas* give the name Bhāgavata, whereas the *Matsya*, *Vāyu* and *Brahmāṇḍa*, have Samābhāga, which is obviously the creation of unintelligent scribes who combined the word *samāḥ* ('years') with the following proper name *Bhāga*, and thus brought into existence a name which never existed.
3. See fn. 2.
4. It is not possible to agree with H.C. Raychoudhuri when he says that "there was at Vidiśā a king named Bhāgavata apart from king Kāśīputra Bhāgabhadra." *Political History of Ancient India*, 394.
5. Mr. Lake was of the opinion that the pillar might have been brought to Bhilsa (Vidiśā) from Besnagar where it was originally set up.
6. गोतम, Venis; गोतमी, D.R. Bhandarkar. But while the strokes for *au* are clear, there is no trace whatsoever of *ī* over *ma*.
7. प्रासादोतमस, Venis. The first syllable is not *pra* but *pu*, and the next *ru* is quite clear on the original. It cannot be *sa*. The next letter is *ṣo* and not *do*.

2

SHUDDH MAHADEV INSCRIPTION OF THE SON OF (MAHĀRĀJA) VIBHUNĀGA*

This inscription was brought to my notice some years back by Professor Shrikanth Kaul, my former pupil, who also very kindly supplied me a photograph of the same. I had intended to publish it after examining it in original ; but as it has not been possible for me to visit the site so far, I am publishing it from the photograph.

The inscription is engraved on the shaft of a broken *Triśūla* (trident) of Śiva at the temple of Śiva, popularly known as Śuddha Mahādeva, and a well-known place of pilgrimage, on the river Devikā, at a distance of nine miles from Chineni, a town in Udhampur District of Jammu and Kashmir State. In Kalhaṇa's *Rājataraṅgiṇī* (VII. 185), there is a reference to the consecration of *Triśulas*.

The writing consists of three lines and is only partially preserved. The characters belong to the north-western variety of the Indian alphabet of the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D., and approximate closely to those of the Mathura Stone Pillar Inscription of Candragupta II, dated in the Gupta era 61, as is clear from the forms of *s* and *m*.

The language of the inscription is Sanskrit. The object of the inscription appears to have been to record the installation of the *Triśūla* at the shrine of Śiva, although the present state of the text does not permit of a very definite assertion on this point.

The inscription was dated in the regnal year of the king who put up the *Triśūla*, but the date has been lost in the damaged portion of the epigraph.

---

*VIJ V (1967).

This record, though brief and imperfectly preserved, is important for two reasons. Firstly, it proves that in the 4th century A.D. or even possibly in the third century A.D., Śuddha Mahādeva was regarded as a sacred place worthy of the visit by the kings. Secondly, Vibhunāga of this record may, in all probability, be identical with the Nāga ruler of that name whose coins have been discovered, at Padmāvatī.[1] In that case, the son of this ruler must have come to Śuddha Mahādeva on a pilgrimage. The only other Nāga document found in north-western India is the metallic seal of Maheśvara Nāga, found at Lahore.[2] But the seal, being a portable object, might have been brought to Lahore from elsewhere, and need not be taken as an evidence of Nāga rule over the region where Lahore is situated. The use of the qualifying word *sva-rājya* with the date may also furnish an indication of the fact that while the date was in his own regnal year, the territories belonged to someone else.

TEXT

1. सिद्धम् [।*] स्वराज्यसंवत्सरे पंच .... ल ...... सत
2. विभुनागस्य पुत्रे[*ण].........पतिना लोक (?)
3. गच्छन्ति ये तु क्षयं... .....

TRANSLATION

"Success has been attained. In the year 5 of his own rule ...... by the son of (Mahārāja) Vibhunāga, the lord of ... (the benefactor of the) world . . . but those who perish. . . ."

Notes and References

1. *JNSI*, V, 26-27.
2. *CII*, III, 282-83.

3

THE ERAN INSCRIPTION OF SAMUDRAGUPTA*

In a note on the Eran inscription of Samudragupta,[1] published in the *Journal of Indian History*, XIV, (1935), 27-29 Dashrath Sharma has put forward the view that in the fourth verse[2] of the inscription, the words in the nominative do not refer to Samudragupta but to some feudatory prince. His argument is: "How could he (Samudragupta) who was a king already and perhaps a *Mahārājāḍhirāja* be described as being consecrated as a mere *rājan* by one who being referred to by the words *bhaktinayavikramatoṣita* and *paramatuṣṭipuraskṛta* must be regarded as his superior".

The objection raised by Dashrath Sharma is perfectly natural, but the conclusion drawn by him that the verse describes a feudatory who was honoured by Samudragupta is hardly tenable. As a matter of fact his attempt to solve one difficulty creates another. The person who received the honours of consecrations *etc*., is a monarch of irresistible prowess (*nṛpatiraprativāryavīryaḥ*). This proud epithet of *aprativāryavīryaḥ* could not have been borne by a prince who was a feudatory of Samudragupta. Samudragupta himself bore the title of *apratirathaḥ* (a matchless warrior) which is more or less akin to *apratīvāryavīryaḥ*. John Allan is of opinion that *apratīvāryavīryaḥ* occurs on the Aśvamedha type of Samudragupta's coins, although on the known specimens, only *apra* has been left.[3] Hence it is certain that no feudatory of Samudragupta could have had the audacity of styling himself as *apratīvāryavīryaḥ*.

The difficulty with regard to the applicability of the verse to Samudragupta disappears at once, if we are able to correctly understand the import of the expression in the instrumental *i.e. bhaktinaya-vikramatoṣitena* and *paramatuṣṭipuraskṛtena.* The existence of a superior who was pleased by Samudragupta's devotion, valour *etc.* is not an impossibility; for he is no other than his father Candragupta I. The statement with regard to consecration (*abhiṣecana*) can be referred either to Samudragupta's formal installation as crown prince, or to his anointment as king. The ceremony called *yauvarājyabhiṣeka i.e.* the installation of the eldest son of a king, as heir-apparent is too well-known to us both from Sanskrit literature and ancient inscriptions.[4]

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* *JIH*, XIX.

It was an equally common practice that the kings in their old age made over the sceptre and the crown to the eldest son, the *Yuvarāja*, and retired to the peaceful solitude of the forest hermitages. Kālidāsa refers to this practice again and again in his works.[5] A few instances are given below :

With regard to Dilīpa he says :

अथ स विषयव्यावृत्तात्मा यथाविधि सूनवे
नृपति-ककुदं दत्त्वा यूने सितातपवारणम् ।
मुनिवनतरुच्छायां देव्या तया सह शिश्रिये
गलितवयसमिक्ष्वाकूणामिदं हि कुलव्रतम् ।।

(*Raghuvaṁśa*, III. 70.)

"And so he with his mind having become averse to worldly pleasures, having duly made over to his youthful son, the white umbrella—that symbol of royalty, retired with his queen to the shade of the trees in the forest, inhabited by hermits; for this is the family vow of the Ikṣvākus, in the declining age."

Kālidāsa's remarks with regard to the anointment of Agnivarṇa, by his father Sudarśana are particularly noteworthy. He says :

अग्निवर्णमभिषिच्य राघवः स्वे पदे तनयमग्नितेजसम् ।
शिश्रिये श्रुतवतामपश्चिमः पश्चिमे वयसि नैमिषं वशी ।।

"The descendent of Raghu (Sudarśana) having anointed (his) son Agnivarṇa, whose splendour was like that of fire, in his position, the self controlled one, who was the foremost of the learned, (himself) resorted to the Naimiṣa forest in the decline of his age."[6]

This reminds one, that Kālidāsa was perhaps aware of an historical incident of the transferring of royalty, similar to the one described in the following verse of the Allahabad Stone Pillar inscription, depicting the scene of Samudragupta's nomination to the throne, by his father Candragupta I :

[आर्य्यो] ही त्युपगुह्य भावपिशुनैरुत्कर्णितै रोमभि:
सभ्येषूच्छ्वसितेषु तुल्यकुलजम्लानानोद्वीक्षित:
स्नेहव्यालुलितेन बाष्पगुरुणा चक्षुषा
य: पित्राभिहितो निरीक्ष्य निखिलां [पाह्येवमुर्वीमिति*]

> "Thou art indeed worthy, (with these words) whom the father, having embraced, with his hair standing erect (and) indicative of his feelings, (and) having looked at him with an eye that could discern merit and was bedimmed with tears and tremulous with affection, while the courtiers cheered up and the collaterals watched with meloncholy faces, addressed thus, 'Do thou protect the entire earth, thus'."

Exactly the same thing has been said in the Eran inscription but in different words. Samudragupta is here stated to have been 'honoured' with the title of king, by his father who was highly pleased with his son's devotion, valour, political wisdom and other virtues. This simply means that Samudragupta was proclaimed king by Caṇdragupta who himself performed the ceremony of anointment (*abhiṣeka*).

Thus it becomes clear that the words *Bhaktinayavikramatoṣitena* and *paramatuṣṭipuraskṛtena* refer to Candragupta I and *nṛpatirapratīvāryavīryaḥ* is Samudragupta and not a feudatory of his.

In the epigraphic records of the Pāla dynasty, we come across an historical instance of the voluntary abdication of Vigrahapāla after handing over the reins of government to his son Nārāyaṇapāla. In the Bhagalpur Copper Plate grant of Nārāyaṇapāladeva[8] we get the following verse :

तपो ममास्तु राज्यं ते द्वाभ्यामुक्तमिदं द्वयोः ।
यस्मिन् विग्रहपालेन सगरेण भगीरथे ॥

"Let penance be mine and kingdom yours", this was said by the two to the two—to him, by Vigrahapāla and to Bhagiratha by Sāgara.

Notes and References

1. Fleet, *CII*, III, 18ff.
2. [पित्रै]* [व] भक्तिनयविक्रमतोषितेन
   [यो] राजशब्दविभवैरभिषेचनाद्यैः ।
   [संमा]-नितः परमतुष्टि पुरस्कृतेन
   [भू-वास*]वो नृपतिरप्रतिवार्यवीर्यः ॥
3. *CCGD*, CXI.
4. *cf.* निसर्गसंस्कारविनीत इत्यसौ नृपेण चक्रे युवराजशब्दभाक् ॥
   and *Raghuvaṁśa, III.35.*
   विनीतमौरसं पुत्रं यौवराज्येऽभिषेचयेत्
   Kāmandaka.
   See also Kamauli Plate of Vijayacandra, dated V.S. 1224, *EI*, IV, 120, 1.20.
5. For similar passages see Raghuvaṁśa, I.8; IV.1; VII.71; and Sākuntalā, IV.20; VII.20; and Vikramorvaśī, V.17.
6. *Raghuvaṁśa*, XIX.1.
7. *CII*, III, (1981 Ed.), 212.
8. *IA*, XV, 304.

4

NOTES ON THE ERAN STONE INSCRIPTION OF SAMUDRAGUPTA*

The Inscription is Posthumous

The Eran inscription of Samudragupta has been published by Dr. Fleet in *CCI*, III, pp. 18-21. It is a fragmentary record. The first six lines containing the first verse and about three-fourths of the second verse, are completely lost. From line 8 to 24 a few syllables in the beginning of each line are gone. The stone is also broken away at the bottom and an indefinite portion of the text is lost and we can form no idea about the extent of the record. The extant portion in the opening lines runs as follows :

line 7. [— — ⏑ — ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ — ⏑] सुवर्णदाने
8. [विस्मा]*रिता नृपतयः पृथुराघवाद्याः [।।]*२
9. [— —]बभूव धनदान्तकतुष्टिकोपतुल्यः
10. [⏑ — ⏑म-नयेन समुद्रगुप्तः [।]*
11. [— —] प्य पार्थिवगणस्सकलः पृथिव्यां
12. [— —] स्त (स्व)-राज्यविभवद्ध‸ुतिमास्थितोऽभूत् [।।]*३

The first half of verse 3 appears to contain a complete idea. It may be put in the prose order as follows : धनदान्तकतुष्टिकोपतुल्यः समुद्रगुप्तः बभूव। The use of the Perfect tense would mean that Samudragupta was not alive at the time the inscription was composed. Dr. Fleet, however, construed the verb *babhūva* as referring to some predecessor of Samudragupta. He says, "From the occurrence of the word *babhūva* in line 9, the first part of the inscription probably mentioned some of his ancestors. But, that the inscription did not extend to the time of any of his successors is shown by the fact that none of their names can be

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******PIHC*, Jaipur (1951)

fitted into any of the places where letters are illegible in lines 11 to 24; consequently the prowess *etc.* described in these lines are those of Samudragupta."[1]

As regards the suggestion of Dr. Fleet that the first part of the inscription probably mentioned some of Samudragupta's ancestors, it has to be noted that there are only two verses preceding the mention of Samudragupta's name in the inscription. Of the first verse nothing has been preserved and so it is impossible to say what it actually contained. But whatever is left of the second verse, appears to pertain to Samudragupta. In line 8, the two missing syllables in the beginning may be restored as *vismā* and this line may be read as given above. The mention of gifts of gold—*suvarṇa-dāna* in line 7 may easily be referred to Samudragupta, who alone in the official Gupta genealogies is given the epithet—*nyāy-āgat-āneka-go-hiraṇya-koṭipradaḥ*—bestowing many crores of lawfully acquired cows and gold. This verse, therefore, purports to say that by his munificent gifts of gold, Samudragupta caused the people to forget even great Kings of the past like Pṛthu and Rāghava. It, therefore, does not refer to Samudragupta's ancestors, but to Samudragupta himself.

The verb *babhūva* occurs in the first half of verse 3, and has, evidently, for its subject the only occurring noun in the nominative, *i.e.*, Samudragupta. The second half of this verse is to be referred to Samudragupta, and cannot be connected with any of his predecessors. By no stretch of imagination can we refer the verb to any of the preceding verses. As explained above the second verse mentions Samudragupta's charities. It is clear beyond doubt that the sense is completed within the verse itself and has not been extended to the third verse. Verses 2 and 3 do not form what is technically called a *yugma*. With the second verse intervening between the first and the third, it is out of question that the verb *babhūva* in the third verse should have anything to do with the first, the contents of which are unknown to us.

As regards the second part of Dr. Fleet's statement, that the names of none of Samudragupta's successors can be fitted into the lacunae up to line 24, it is of course evident that the entire description refers to Samudragupta alone; but the stone is broken away at the bottom, and in the circumstances it cannot be ascertained how far it extended and what its concluding part contained. This portion might easily be supposed to have contained the name of a successor of Samudragupta. In view of the fact that the verb *babhūva* has been used, as shown above, for Samudragupta, the inscription has to be regarded as posthumous.

Meaning of the Compound Pauruṣa-Parakrama-Datta-Śulkā

The compound *pauruṣa-parākrama-datta-śulkā* occurs in the following verse :

— — स्य पौरुषपराक्रमदत्तशुल्का
— — श्वरत्नधनधान्यसमृद्धियुक्ता ।
— — गृहेषु मुदिता वहुपुत्रपौत्र-
— कामिणी कुलवधु: व्रतिनि निविष्टा ॥

The word *Śulka* in the first line of this verse has been taken by Dr. Fleet in the sense of dower and he has translated the line thus : "whose dower was provided by (his) manliness and prowess." The late Dr.K. P. Jayaswal also understood the line as conveying a similar meaning as is clear from his following observation :

"Wife was never so honoured as Samudragupta honoured Dattadevī. In the greatest moment of his triumph at Eran the Emperor of All India proudly remembered his life-partner and the day of his marriage when the dowry consisted of only the manliness of her lord."[2]

The lexiconic meanings of *Śulka* are : 1. custom-duty, 2. money advanced to ratify a bargain, 3. purchase price of a girl, 4. nuptial present, 5. dowry, 6. present given by the bride-groom to his bride.[3] In order to determine the particular sense in which *Śulka* has been used in the Eran inscription, the best method is to study some parallel passages in which the word occurs, compounded with '*pauruṣa*' and '*parākrama*' or a synonym for the same. The following are a few important parallels :

(a) In the Rāmāyaṇa the word occurs in the following verses uttered by Janaka, when Rāma had successfully bent and broken the bow :

मम सत्या प्रतिज्ञा सा वीर्यशुल्केति कौशिक ।
सीता प्राणैर्वहुमता देया रामाय मे सुता ॥ I, 67, 23.
and राजानं प्रश्रितैर्वाक्यैरानयन्तु पुरं मम ।
प्रदानं वीर्यशुल्कायाः कथयन्तु च सर्वशः ॥ I. 67, 25.

In both these verses *virya-śulkā* means 'she whose price is valour', *i.e.* who is to be won or obtained in marriage only by the merit of personal valour.

(b) The following verse occurs in the Bhāgavata Purāna :

या वीर्यशुल्केन हृता स्वयंवरे प्रमथ्य चैद्यप्रमुखान् हि शुष्मिणः ।
प्रद्युम्नसाम्वाम्बसुतादयोऽपरा याश्चाहृता भौमवधे सहस्रशः ॥ I, 10, 28.

Here there is a reference to brides who had been won in a *svayamvara* by the display of valour (*lit*. by the bride-price of valour) having overthrown the valiant heroes headed by the King of Cedi.

(c) In the Raghuvaṃśa of Kālidāsa, the word occurs in the following verses :

1. तस्य वीक्ष्य ललितं वपुः शिशोः पार्थिवः प्रथितवंशजन्मनः ।
स्वं विचिन्त्य च धनुर्दुरानमं पीडितो दुहितृशुल्कसंस्थ्या ॥ XI, 38

Here we are told that Janaka felt oppressed on account of the condition of the 'bride-price' for his daughter, which consisted of the power to bend the bow—on seeing the tender body of the youth (Rama) and thinking of the bow which was unbendable.

Further, 2. दृष्टसारमथ रुद्रकार्मुके वीर्यशुल्कमभिनन्द्य मैथिलः ।
राघवाय तनयामयोनिजां रूपिणीं श्रियमिव न्यवेदयत् ॥ XI, 47

Here, Janaka, is said to have heartily approved of the 'purchase-price' which consisted of the valour of Rāma, and offered his Sitā.

In all the verses quoted above the word *vīryaśulkā* (*lit*. she whose price consisted of valour) has been used for a maiden, the condition for winning whose hand was the possession of manly prowess which was to be displayed by the suitor according to specific conditions. The compound *pauruṣa-parakrama-datta-śulkā*, in the Eran inscription is an exact parallel to the compound वीर्यशुल्क occurring in the quotations given above.

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Notes and References

1. *CII*, III, 19.
2. *History of India* A.D. *150 to* A.D. *350* p. 208.
3. Apte's *Sanskrit English Dictionary*.

5

SOME FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON THE ERAN INSCRIPTION OF SAMUDRAGUPTA*

The Eran inscription of Samudragupta is of considerable historical and epigraphic interest. It is rather unfortunate that the 'large squared stone' on which it is engraved has suffered much from the ravages of human hand. A portion of the stone has been chopped off both at the top and the bottom, and the left hand side has suffered from wear and tear on account of the people whetting tools on this side of the stone, and thus effacing one to three syllables in the beginning of each line, from line 8 to 24. Beyond that a complete *pāda* of each verse is gone. The broken portion at the top contained one complete verse and the first hemestich of the second ; but it is difficult to ascertain the extent of the damage at the bottom.

The lost syllables in the beginning of lines 7 to 24 have been conjecturally restored by several scholars—Dr. Fleet, Dr. Sircar, Dr. Mirashi, Mr. Sadhu Ram and the present writer. As these restorations have an important bearing on the historical information to be deduced from this record it is proposed to examine them, in detail.

In lines 7 and 8 a comparison has been made between Samudragupta, and the kings of yore like Pṛthu and Rāghava. Pṛthu is obviously Pṛthu Vainya who is included in the traditional lists of Cakravartins[1] (universal sovereigns) and is also noted for his glory[2], but is not noted for munificence of gifts. Rāghava or Rāma is mentioned both amongst the Cakravartins, as well as those kings who gained fame by their gifts of cattle[3] and by liberal donations and devotion to Brāhmaṇas.[4] The preserved portion of line 7 contains the expression *suvarṇādāne* only, which is to be construed with the matter in line 8, in which the two lost syllables have been restored as *saṃvā* by D.C. Sircar, *vismā* by us and *nyakkā* by Sadhu Ram, thus making the word *saṃvāritā*, *vismāritā*, and *nyakkāritā*. Out of these three suggested readings, *saṃvāritā* is the passive past participle from the causative of the root *vṛ* with *saṃ*, which means to ward off, to drive back, to repel.[5] None of these meanings fits in the present context. *Nyakkāritā*, suggested by Sadhu Ram is open to more serious objection.[6] The verb *nyakkṛ* means to humiliate. As pointed out above, the poet is making a comparison between Samudragupta and the kings Pṛthu and Rāma. Can it be imagined that any Sanskrit poet would employ such a derogatory expression with reference to Rāma or even Pṛthu, both of whom have been repeatedly eulogised for their extensive imperial sway, royal splendour, liberal gifts, *etc.?* No Indian poet, however great might have been his desire to flatter his patron, would have dared to say that Rāma had been put to shame by Samudragupta. Such an expression amounts to a veritable sacrilege. In order to highlight the charity of his patron he might have employed words purporting to suggest that the people forgot even the munificence of Rāghava—so abundant was the charity of Samudragupta. In the circumstances, the reading *vismāritā* suggested by us formerly is the most likely choice.[7]

**PIHC*, Patiala, 1967.

In line 9, in place of the two missing syllables, D.C. Sircar has supplied the word *putro*, and connected it with Samudragupta. This restoration implies that the preceding verse contained the name of Samudragupta's father. But the preceding verse contains a specific reference to the gifts of gold made by the person who is the subject of that verse. Samudragupta's father Candragupta I is not known for his gifts of gold. None of the official seals, nor any other inscription, contains any statement to this effect. Therefore it is impossible to accept the view that the second verse refers to Candragupta I. Since, the second verse did not contain the name of Samudragupta's father, it would be presumptuous to postulate that, it was contained in the first verse, which, in all probability was benedictory. Therefore the reading *putro* has to be rejected. We may fill the lacuna with a word like *rājā* or *bhūpo*, the latter being preferable on account of its alliterative effect.[8]

In lines 17-20, the text has been given by Dr. D.C. Sircar as follows :

[दत्ता*]स्या पौरुष-पराक्क्रम-दत्त-शुल्का
[हस्त्य*]श्व-धन-धान्य-समृद्धि-युक्ता [।*]
[नित्य*]ङ्गृहेषु मुदिता बहु-पुत्र-पौत्र-
[स*]ङ्क्रामिणी कुलवधूः व्रतिनी निविष्टा [।।*]

Drs. Fleet and Jayaswal were of the view that this verse referred to Samudragupta's Chief queen Dattadevī.[9] Probably, following their suggestion, Dr. Sircar has restored the first two missing syllables in line 17 as *dattā* which he regards as an abbreviation of the queen's full name Dattadevī.[10] But there are inherent difficulties in accepting this restoration. The adjectival compound *bahuputra-pautra-saṃkrāmiṇī* does not mean 'who went about in the company of many sons and grandsons' as rendered by Fleet. The word *saṃkrāmiṇī* is the feminine form of *saṃkrāmin*, which means 'passing over' or 'being transferred' to others. The sense of walking or strolling cannot be conveyed by the causal form. Once this is realised, it can never be suggested that the verse refers to Samudragupta's queen; for how can we speak of hers as passing over to her sons and grandsons ? The restoration of the first word as *dattā* in line 17 is therefore untenable.[11] As suggested by Mm. Dr. V.V. Mirashi, the verse describes the royal fortune—the Rājyalakṣmi of Samudragupta, which after his death would be handed down to his sons and grandsons.[12] The other adjectives like *pauruṣa-parākkrama-dattā-śulkā* can be applied to the royal fortune with absolute propriety. Mr. Sadhu Ram, however, has criticised this view of Dr. Mirashi, on the ground that 'the epithets *pauruṣa-parākkrama-dattā-śulkā*, *muditā*, *kulavadhū* and *vratinī* evidently refer to a human being, and that must be Samudragupta's wife.[13] However it is a matter of common knowledge that Sanskrit poets often depict the earth as the royal spouse and bestow on it the attributes of a lady. The following verses of Kālidāsa may be quoted as apt illustrations :

अनेन पाणौ विधिवद्गृहीते महाकुलीनेन महीव गुर्वी ।
रत्नानुविद्धार्णवमेखलाया दिशः सपत्नी भव दक्षिणस्याः ।। *Rghv. VI. 63.*

Here the earth is spoken of as a co-wife (*sapatni*) a perfectly human epithet. Like a lady she is described as wearing a girdle in the form of the sea. Again :

प्रतिकृतिरचनाभ्यो दूतिसन्दर्शिताभ्यः
समधिकतररूपाः शुद्धसन्तानकामैः ।
अधिविविदुरमात्यैराहृतास्तस्य यूनः
प्रथमपरिगृहीते श्रीभुवौ राजकन्याः ॥

Rghv. XVIII. 53.

'The royal maidens, who were more beautiful than the portraits shown by the female messengers, and who were brought to that youth by the ministers desirous of a pure progeny, cherished the feeling of cowives towards the royal fortune, and the earth which had been appropriated beforehand.' Here again, the King is said to have married the royal fortune and the earth, who are depicted as the existing wives of the King.

The same idea is further repeated in the following stanza:

अथ तस्य विवाहकौतुकं ललितं बिभ्रत एव पार्थिवः ।
वसुधामपि हस्तगामिनीमकरोदिन्दुमतीमिवापरम् ॥

Rghv. VIII. 1.

'The King (Raghu) transferred the earth too as if it were another Indumatī into the hands of him who was still bearing the charming thread worn at the marriage ceremony'. Here again the earth *i.e.* the empire is compared with the royal spouse whom the youthful Aja had already married. Instances can be multiplied *ad infinitum.*

In contemporary art, also, the earth has been represented in the form of a female. The well-known Varāha images at Udayagiri near Vidisha, in Madhya Pradesh, and at Eran, in the Sagar District, depicting the rescue of the earth by the God Viṣṇu, show the earth in the form of a lady who is clinging to the sonut of the boar. Thus, both the literary and the art evidences, conclusively demonstrate, that human attributes have been given to the earth. Therefore, there should be no-difficulty at all, in referring all the adjectives contained in the fifth verse to Samudragupta's royal fortune (Śrī) or to his realm (Bhū), which had been acquired by Samudragupta by means of his valour.

As regards the words *kulavadhū* and *vratinī*, they are equally well applicable to the earth. Samudragupta had inherited a kingdom from his father. So his royalty was *kula-kramāgata* or hereditary, and she had settled down after taking a vow of fidelity towards Samudragupta; and yet it is certain that she was not to remain with him for all time but would pass on to his sons and grandsons after he was no more. Thus there is nothing improper in applying the human epithets to the earth of the royal fortune, since that is an accepted notion in Sanskrit poetry. The royal fortune, though proverbially fickle, had become attached to Samudragupta so much that it had now come to stay in his family, and would pass on to his sons and grandsons.

In the light of the above discussion, there is no cogency in inserting the name of Dattadevī, in the beginning of line 17. The most probable reading, worth adopting is either *śrīḥ* or *bhūḥ*. Both the words suit the meter as well as the sense intended to be conveyed by the poet.

In line 19, Mr. Sadhu Ram, has supplied the two lost syllables as *seya*, which would give us (*sa iya*) *m*. But the suggested restoration is entirely a misfit. Even if it is conceded for the sake of argument, that the verse describes Dattadevi, no writer would bring in the demonstrative pronoun in the middle of the statement. The demonstrative pronoun would be appropriate only after the statement about Dattadevī has been completed. Dr. Sircar's restoration by means of *nitya* is much better.

Mr. Sadhu Ram's interpretation of the plural form *gṛheṣu*, is also erroneous. He says, "Again, the word *gṛheṣu*, 'in the house' denotes 'the family residence' and not 'the royal house', the plural number having an implicit reference to the members of the family". We would like to point out that the plural in *gṛheṣu*, has nothing to do with the members of the family. Here the poet has used the word *gṛha* in the masculine gender which, as explained in the *Amarakośa* is always used in the plural *gṛhāḥ puṃsi ca bhūmnyeva*. That the use of the plural in *gṛha*, has anything to do with the number residing therein is a gratuitous supposition. The explanation given in the *Amarakośa* makes it clear that the word *gṛha*, though used in plural conveys the meaning of the singular.

On the identification of the person referred to in the fourth verse of this record, we had observed long ago that, the intended reference was to Candragupta I, father of Samudragupta.[14] Mr. Sadhu Ram has merely repeated our conclusion without referring to it.

Similarly, our view that the record is posthumous, had been criticised by Dr. D.C. Sircar long ago[15]. Mr Sadhu Ram has merely repeated Dr. Sircar's view without referring to it or adding any new arguments to it. We agree with Dr. Sircar that the past perfect tense has been used in the inscriptions with reference to contemporary rulers also. But, as pointed out by the learned critic himself, the use of the perfect, is justified even in the case of a living king, because the event took place before the time of writing. For example it has been said of the ruling king, Jainik :

पञ्चाशीत्या युतेऽतीते समानां शतपंचके ।
गौप्ते ददावदो नृपः सोपरागेऽर्कमंडले ।।[16]

Here the grant was made at the time of the solar eclipse and the record was prepared later than the actual date of the gift. But this does not give us a licence to take the perfect in all places, in that sense. That the subject of the verb *babhūva* is Samudragupta, is conceded by Dr. Sircar. Now in the same inscription we are later on told that the Royal Fortune of Samudragupta has become stable in his house (*i.e.*, dynasty).[17] The words *bahuputrapautra–saṃkrāmini kulavadhū* are very significant. It means that the *kula-vadhū, i.e.*, the Lakṣmī of the Gupta house, which is observing the vow of fidelity, has passed on to the sons and grandsons of Samudragupta, and thus has settled down happily in his house. If proof was needed of Samudragupta's having passed away, this is provided by the statement that the royal fortune of the Gupta house had passed on to the sons and son's sons of Samudragupta, which obviously could not have happened in the lifetime of Samudragupta.

As regards the use of the present tense in *paribambhramīti* and *paritrasanti*, it may be pointed out that the poet is speaking with reference to his own time, when the fame of Samudragupta was still roaming about the world and the enemies of the Guptas still shuddered at the thought of the great prowess of Samudragupta. We may compare with this situation the idea contained in the following verse :

वैधव्यतीव्रव्यसनक्षतानां स्मृत्वा यमद्याप्यरिसुन्दरीणाम् ।
भयाद्भवत्यायतलोचनानां घनस्तनायासकरः प्रकम्पः ।।[18]

'Remembering whom, even today, there is a shudder, out of fear, causing exertion to the plump breasts of the fair ladies of the enemies, having long eyes, who have suffered the grievous injury of widowhood'.

Here, though, Bandhuvarmā was not alive in Mālava Saṃvat 529, the mere recollection of his name was still causing a feeling, comparable to what is conveyed by the word *paritrasanti*. There is therefore, no obstacle in our way in regarding the record as posthumous.

Notes and References

1. *Mahābhārata*, VII. 55-70.
2. *ibid.*, II. 52, 21-22.
3. *ibid.*, XIII. 76.
4. *ibid.*, XIII. 137, 14.
5. *vide*, Monier William's *Sanskrit English Dictionary*.
6. *KURJ*, I, 14, fn. 3.
7. *PAIOC*, XVII Session, 314, Ahmedabad, 1953.
8. It may be incidentally pointed out that the interpretation put by Mr. Sadhu Ram on the expression *dhanad-āntaka-tuṣṭikopatulyaḥ* is erroneous. He has remarked, that 'Samudragupta was a man of moods' (*op. cit.* 19). That is not at all the significance of the comparison, which is intended to highlight his royal qualities. He is represented as strict and severe in his punishment like the God of death (Yama) and munificent in his gifts like Kubera, when he was pleased. The *Viśṇudharmottara-purāṇa* throws adequate light on the genesis of this comparison :

करोति च यदा दानं धनानां सर्वतो नृपः ।
विसर्गार्थं सुरश्रेष्ठ तदा भवति वित्तदः ।।

Viṣṇudharmottara-purāṇa, II. 71. 7.

'When the King makes gift of his riches, on all sides for giving them away then O you, best of [the gods ! he becomes dhanada].

यदापराधिनां चैव विधत्ते निग्रहं नृपः ।
तदा भवति लोकेषु राजा वैवस्वतः सदा ।।

ibid., II. 71.5

'When the king punishes the wrong-doers,
Then he, the king, becomes Yama in the world.'

A fuller version of this comparison is to be seen in the Allahabad Stone Pillar inscription, where Samudragupta has been described as धनदवरुणेन्द्रान्तकसमः ।

9. *CII*, III, 21.

Dr. Jayaswal observed, "wife was never so honoured as Samudragupta honoured Dattadevī. In the greatest momement of his triumph at Eran the Emperor of All India proudly remembered his life partner and the day of his marriage when her dowry consisted of only the manliness of her lord and whose grandeur now consisted in being the ideal Hindu woman, the *kulavadhū* and the Hindu mother surrounded by sons and grandsons." *JBORS*. XIX. 207-8.

10. *Select Inscriptions*, 261, fn. 3.
11. *cf*. Shri S.V. Sohoni's very pertinent observation that the restoration of *dattā* would be a breach of the protocol in as much as the name is given without any royal titles. *JBRS*, LI (1965), 50-52.
12. *Studies in Indology*. IV. 205-7.
13. *KURJ*, I, 16.
14. *JIH*, XIX (1940), 27-29.
15. *PIHC*, XVII (Ahmedabad, 1954), 72-78.
16. *IA*, II, 257f.
17. It must be noted that the expression *gṛheṣu* is to be taken as an instance of the use of *gṛha* in the masculine gender when it is always in the plural in form but singular in sense.
18. Mandasor Stone Inscription of the Guild of Silk Weavers, dated Mālava Era 529 *CII*. III. (N.Ed.), 326 ll. 15-16.

6

SAMUDRAGUPTA'S PERFORMANCE OF AŚVAMEDHA SACRIFICE*

The performance of the Aśvamedha sacrifice by Samudragupta is an outstanding event of his reign. Samudragupta issued a special class of gold coins to commemorate the event. On this variety of his gold coinage, we have the explicit mention of the performance in the following—*rājādhirājaḥ pṛthiviṁ vijitya divaṃ jayaty-āhṛtavājimedhaḥ*—"the king of kings, having conquered the earth, conquers heaven, having performed the horse sacrifice." In the Gupta genealogies as found in official documents like the Bhitari Stone Pillar Inscription of Skandagupta, the Nalanda Clay Sealing of Narasiṁhagupta and the Nalanda Clay Sealing of Kumāragupta, there occurs, invariably, the significant epithet of Samudragupta *cirotsannāśvamedh-āharttā*. Dr. Fleet has translated this epithet as, "the restorer of the Aśvamedha sacrifice that had been long in abeyance."[1] This rendering gives the impression that the performance of the time-honoured Vedic rite of the horse sacrifice had not been witnessed for a long time past and that Samudragupta's performance of it was considered to mark the revival of an extinct practice. However, 'restorer' is not an accurate rendering of *āharttā*. The root *hṛ* preceded by the preposition *a* means 'to perform a sacrifice.' The root has been employed in this sense by writers of classical Sanskrit verse and prose. In Kālidāsa's Raghuvaṃśa, the root has been used several times.[2] Bāṇa in his Kādambarī employs the expression *āharttā kratūnāṃ* : 'the performer of the sacrifices'. Thus we see that the correct meaning of *āharttā* is 'performer of a sacrifice'. Apart from this, however, the expression

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* *PAIOC*, Lucknow, 1948.

cirotsanna, which has been used as an adjective for the sacrifice, can give us the idea that Samudragupta's act amounted to a 'restoration' of the horse sacrifice, since the rite is spoken of as one which had been extinct for a time.[3] But evidence is available to show that several horse sacrifices had been performed from time to time before Samudragupta. We know that Puṣyamitra, the founder of the Śuṅga dynasty, performed two horse sacrifices. To one of these, Kālidāsa makes a reference in his Mālavikāgnimitram. A silver coin of Viṣnudeva, bears on the obverse the same device as we find on the Aśvamedha type of Samudragupta's gold coins.[4] The characters used in the legend of this coin are of a very early type of the Brāhmī script and resemble closely the characters of the Aśokan inscriptions. The coin cannot be later than the second century B.C. Recent archaeological excavations in the district of Dehradun have brought to light bricks of the fire altar of the horse sacrifice performed by a king named Śilavarman, about the third century A.D. Shortly before Samudragupta, the Bhāraśiva Nāgas had performed ten horse sacrifices in the vicinity of the Gangā and the Vākāṭaka monarch, Pravarsena I, had performed four. In view of these continuous celebrations, the question naturally arises, how could the successors of Samudragupta credit him with the revival of the sacrifice ? Various answers have been given by eminent scholars. It may not be out of place to refer to them briefly here.

Dr. Hemchandra Raychaudhuri, who raised this question as early as 1923, remarks: "It is probable, however, that the court poets of the Guptas knew little about these monarchs."[5]

Dr. Krishnaswami Aiyangar has discussed this point at length in his admirable monograph *Studies in Gupta History*. He remarks, "Gupta inscriptions generally describe the *Āśvamedha* as one that had long fallen into desuetude. *Cirotsanna* would literally mean long decayed or given up, for, as a matter of history, we do know that after the days of Aśoka, who, in his Buddhist fervour, put an end to it, there were several celebrations and several celebrants. Puṣyamitra is said to have celebrated it; his contemporary, Khāravela of Kalinga, seems to have celebrated something akin and a Sātavāhana ruler of the Dakhan, the great Sātakarni, lays claim to having performed it. It would, therefore, be difficult to understand *cirotsanna* in the sense of having been given up for long. The term *cirotsanna*, however, is found used in connection with the *Aśvamedha* in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, where it is explained that the sacrifice had lost some of its constituent elements and, therefore, a sort of expiatory ceremony had to be performed. This means, that the old time ceremony had lost some of the details of its performance even so long ago as the time of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. The ceremony was brought to a close by the performance of what was known as *atirātrasoma*, which was an apology for the shortcoming in the performance of the elaborate Aśvamedha sacrifice. It is just possible that in the Gupta inscriptions the Aśvamedha has that meaning; but there is perhaps a little more in it that is implied in this explanation. At the time that Puṣyamitra and others are said to have performed the sacrifice, the position of the celebrants could not be regarded as that of unquestioned suzerainty Hence *cirotsanna* here might mean that the *Āśvamedha* sacrifice had not been celebrated for long as a full detailed imperial sacrifice and Samudragupta might have laid claim to having done it, it may be since the days of the famous Rājasūya by Yudhisthira."[6]

The second of the two explanations offered by Dr. K. S. Aiyangar was also offered by Dr. D.R. Bhandarkar.[7]

These explanations do not satisfactorily meet the objection that in the face of a series of performances of the rite in the recent past, the officers of the Gupta secretariate could not, in fairness., give to their lord an attribute which was not justified. Dr. K. S. Aiyangar did not fully comprehend the significance of the reference in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.

The true explanation of *utsanna* was given for the first time by the late Dr. A. B. Keith in a learned aricle in the Z. D. M.G., LXVI (1912), 1929-31.

In the Taittirīya Samhitā, the Aśvamedha is called an *Utsanna-yajña* : उत्सन्नयज्ञो वै एष यदश्वमेधः । कस्तद्वेदेत्याहुर्यदि सर्वो वै क्रियते न वा सर्वः इति ।[8] In the same text, the expression has been applied to the Agnicayana ritual. In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa the word *utsanna* has been used for the Cāturmāsya rite : उत्सन्न यज्ञ इव वा एष यच्चातुर्मास्यानि । (II, 5, 2, 48) and also for the horse sacrifice, (cf. XIII, 3, 3, 6): उत्सन्न यज्ञ इव वा एव यदश्वमेधः किं वा ह्येतस्य क्रियते किं वा ना ।

In the Kāṭhaka and Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitas also the adjective *utsanna* has been used for the Vājapeya rite.[9] It is impossible to concede that Vedic rites of outstanding importance like the Aśvamedha, Vājapeya and Cāturmāsya had gone into disuse or were passing into desuetude at the time when these texts were being written. The concluding portion of the references cited above *i.e.* 'who knows, they say if all of it is done or not' seems to indicate that these ceremonies were so lengthy that some little detail was always likely to be left out. Therefore, the meaning lengthy, extended or protracted seems to be the most likely one for the word *utsanna*. Dr. Keith has pointed out that in the Suśruta Saṃhitā the term *utsanna* is used for wounds that are swollen. As applied to a sacrifice it would mean 'a sacrifice swollen to great lengths,' *i.e.* protracted. This sense will fit in excellently well in the epithet of Samudragupta. *Cirotsannāśvamedhāharttā* should be explained as one 'who performed the horse sacrifice, which is a long protracted rite.' Thus we can exonerate the Gupta officers of the charge of having made an inaccurate statement, and Samudragupta's successors of indulging in a vain boast with regard to their ancestor.

Notes and References

1. *CII.* III, 44, 54.
2. *e.g.* स विश्वजितमाजह्रे यज्ञं सर्वस्वदक्षिणाम् Raghuvaṁśa, IV, 86. and तस्या एव प्रतिकृतिसखो यत् क्रतूनाजहार ।। *ibid.*, XIV, 87.
3. The root सद् with उत् means to fall into ruin or decay. Hence उत्सन्न—extinct.
4. The coin has been described in detail by Prinsep; Essays, I, 115, Plate VII, 1.
5. *Political History of Ancient India*, 5th edition, 549. The question had been raised about the same time by D.B. Diskalkar, who did not attempt an answer. See *IA*, 1923, 17.
6. *Studies in Gupta History*, 44-45.
7. "All things considered, Samudragupta can alone very well claim to have celebrated the Aśvamedha of the Epic style, which was in abeyance for long

Certainly it was not performed with such *eclat* by any body except perhaps Puṣyamitra, who, however, came into collision with one enemy on the confine of his dominions and who does not seem to have wielded sway over the whole of India as the Gupta sovereign did." *IC*, I, 118.

8. *T.S.*, V, 4, 12, 3, "the horse sacrifice, is an extensive sacrifice who knows they say, "if all of it is done or not."
9. XIV, 5, I 11, 6.

7

EPIGRAPHIC NOTES-I*

Riddhapur Copper Plates of Prabhāvatī Gupta.

This inscription was published by Y. R. Gupte in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, XX (1924), 52-61.

In line 11 of the text is to be found the somewhat strange compound *s-āgra-varṣa-śata-diva-putra-pautrā*, which he has translated as, 'who has sons and grandsons, a life of full hundred years, and will (in the end) live in heaven.' He further suggested two alternatives. Firstly *diva* may stand for *divya*, and in this case the compound to be translated as, 'who has renowned sons and grandsons and who has lived a life of full hundred years'; and secondly on the analogy of *devaputravato* in the Sarnath inscription,[1] it may be explained as 'who had and has sons and grandsons as reigning kings.'

But it is evident that all these explanations are strained and far fetched. The compound becomes easily comprehensible as soon as we find out the correct reading. The syllable read by Gupte as *di* is in reality *jī*. Of course the upper bar of *j* has been left out by the engraver. The formation of this *j* may be compared with the same letter in *jitaṃ* in the beginning of the first line. The compound should be read therefore as *s-āgra-varṣa-śata-jīva-putra-pautrā*. With *jīva-putra-pautrā* we may compare *jīva-putrā* in the following verses from the Rāmāyaṇa :

(*a*) जीवपुत्रे निवर्तस्व पुत्र रक्षस्व चाङ्गदम् । IV. 19. 11.
(*b*) अङ्गदस्तु कुमारोऽयं द्रष्टव्यं जीवपुत्रया । IV. 21. 4.

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*PIHC, IV (1940).

The abstract noun *jīvaputtrattvaṃ* occurs in the Bijayagadh inscription of Viṣṇuvardhana.[2] The Prakrit form *jīvaputāe* occurs in the Mora brick inscription.[3]

Bilsad Pillar Inscription of Kumāragupta I, dated [*G.S.*] *96.*

This inscription has been published by J. F. Fleet in *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, III, 42 ff.

In line 7 of the text we have a reading *bhagavatas=trailokya-tejas-saṃbhāra-saṃtat-ādbhūta-mūrtter-*, which has been translated as, 'of the divine (god) Svāmi-Mahāsena whose wondrous form is covered over with the accumulation of the lustre of the three worlds.' Now the word *saṃtata* does not mean 'covered.' Its literal meaning is 'stretched', and hence it is also used in the sense of 'continuous, constant, *etc.*' But none of these meanings fits in here. The defect lies in the text. What has been read as *saṃtata* is really *saṃbhūta*, and the expression may now be (read as *bhagavatas-trailokya-tejas-sambhāra-saṃbhūt-ādibhuta murtter* and) translated as 'of the divine one, of wondrous[4] form born of (the god who is) the collection of the lustre of the three worlds.' The letters *t* and *bh* are so alike that they are liable to be easily mistaken for each other.

Girnar Rock Inscription of Skandagupta.

This inscription has been published by J. F. Fleet in *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, III, 56 c.

In the beginning of line 6 we have *ārtto daridro vyasanī kadaryo daṇḍ* [*y*] *o na vā yo bhṛśa-pīḍitaḥ syāt II.* In forming the word *daṇḍyo*, Fleet had to supply a subscript *y*, which is hardly justified. I have examined the original stone, and the syllable is quite clearly engraved and in tact. On the top there are no traces of medial *o*—the two curved strokes being part of *ṇ* itself. On the other hand in the middle of *n*, there is a horizontal bar on the left hand side, which is evidently medial *e*. The word is therefore to be read as *daṇḍena*.

Indor Copper Plate of Skandagupta dated the year 146.

This inscription has been published by Fleet in *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, III, 68-72.

In line 5 of the text we have a word Candrāpuraka. Although the original plate is not available now, but in the photolitho in Fleet's Volume, the letter *c* has medial *e* attached to it. Hence, we should read *cendrāpuraka* which means we have two words here *c* and Indrāpuraka combined euphonically. Indrapura is mentioned in lines 6, 7 and 8 below. It was here that the temple of the god Sun was situated, to which a donation was made. The reading Candrāpuraka was evidently a mistake.

Bhitari Pillar Inscription of Skandagupta.

This inscription has been published by Fleet in *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, III, 52.

In line 16 towards the end the text runs as follows: *śrotreṣu gāṅga-dhvani*. It is incomprehensible what is this *gāṅga-dhvani?* The river Ganges flows very quietly at some distance from Bhitari and there could be no question of the mention of 'the roar of the Ganges waters'. An examination of the estampage of the inscription, will make it clear that what has been read as *gā* is *śā* and the next syllable is not *ṅga* but *rṅga*. The expression is therefore *śārṅga-dhvani*. The passage depicts some battle scene, and refers to the twang of the bows.

Mandasor Stone Inscription of the Guild of Silkweavers, dated 529 M.S.

This inscription has been published by Fleet in *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, III, 79.

In line 4 of the text we have the compound *puṣp-āvanamrataru-maṇḍ-avataṃsakāyāḥ*. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar who examined the record, remarked, "ear ornaments are always decorative and it involves a tautology to call them decorative again"[5] so he suggested *khaṇḍa* instead of *maṇḍa*. But if we look at the form of *kh* in lines 3 and 7 it is markedly,different. It is neither *m* nor *kh* but it is *ṣ*. We should therefore read ṣaṇḍa instead of khaṇḍa. The word ṣaṇḍa in the sense of 'multitude' often occurs in Sanskrit literature. We may compare the following line from Bhāsa's Abhiṣeka, II. 25. सुरुचिरतरुषण्डं तोयदाभं त्रिकूटमं । and कुमुदकमलषण्डे from Śiśupālavadha XI. 15.

In line 12, of the text we read *nārījanaḥ* priyam=upaiti na tāvad-agryā (śryā) ṃ yāvan=na paṭṭa-maya-vastra-yugāni-dhatte. With the reading *priyaṃ* the word *agryāṃ* did not yield any suitable sense in the sentence, and Fleet had to correct it to *aśryāṃ*. No such correction shall be necessary if the true reading is discovered. What Fleet has read as *pri* is really *śri*. With the new reading *śriyam=upaiti na tāvad-agryāṃ*, 'does not attain foremost beauty' the sense is not only clear but is much improved.

Sarnath Image Inscription of Budhagupta, dated Gupta Year 157.

This inscription has been published in the Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, 1914-15, 124-125.

In line 3 we have *citra-vidya sacitritam*, which is evidently meaningless. What has been read as *dyā* is *nyā*, and the following *sa* is to be taken along with it. We should read it therefore as *citra-vinyāsa-citritāṃ*, 'embellished by an assemblage of decorative designs.' After this we get : *Yad-atra puṇyaṃ pratimāṃ kārayitvā mayā bhṛtaṃ*. This is to be corrected as *yad-asti puṇyaṃ pratimāṃ kārayitvā mam=āstu tat etc*. what has been read as *tra* is *sti*. The upper consonant is clearly *s* and the medial *i* is clear at the top of it. *Mayā bhṛtam* is purely imaginary. The second syllable is not *yā* but *mā*, and the supposed *bhr* is *stu* in reality.

Nalanda and Bhitari Seals of Kumāragupta III.

The Bhitari seal of Kumāragupta, disclosed the names of three new Gupta emperors namely Purugupta, Narasiṃhagupta and Kumāragupta [II]. The first name has been usually supposed to be Pura not Puru. But both on the Bhitari Seal and the Nālandā clay seal, there is visible below the vertical line of *r* a stroke for short *u*. So that the name is really Purugupta and not Puragupta. If we look at the names of the various Gupta emperors we find that it is really the first part that is the real name, the second part Gupta is a mere addition to it : For example Candra, Samudra, Kumāra, Skanda, all can very well stand alone. But in the case of Pura, if we separate Gupta from it, it does not sound well, for Pura only means a city or fort. On the other hand Puru is a very familiar and ancient name. Hence we should read it as Puru-gupta and not Puragupta.[6]

Notes and References

1. *ASI. AR*, 1914-15, 125.
2. *CII*. III, 252-54.
3. *ASIAR*. 1911-12, 128 and E.I. XXIV, 199.
4. Perhaps the reference is to the six heads of Kārttikeya, *cf. Kālidāsa's*, अत्यादित्यं हुतवहमुखे संभृतं तद्धि तेजः। in *Meghadūta*, 43.
5. Collected Works of Sir R.G. Bhandarkar, III, 400.
6. Hoernle has pointed out that General Sir A. Cunningham read it as Puru from a certain coin in his possession. See *JASB.*, 1894, 212.

8

EPIGRAPHIC NOTES—II*

Allahabad Stone Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta

In line 27 of this inscription the expression विद्वज्जनोपजीव्यानेककाव्यक्रियाभिः प्रतिष्ठितकविराजशब्दस्य has been translated by Fleet as follows: "who established (his) title of 'King of poets' by various poetical compositions that were fit to be the means of subsistence of learned people."[1] Here the meanings of the root उप + √ जीव् have not been properly appreciated. Of course 'to live upon' is one of the senses in which this root is used but this sense does not suit the present context. How could Samudragupta's compositions be the means of subsistence for the learned? The verb has been used here in a different and technical sense of 'drawing upon' *i.e.*, ' to derive inspiration from'. In this sense the root उप + √ जीव् has actually been used by various writers. The following are a few examples :

(a) सर्वेषां कविमुख्यानामुपजीव्यं भविष्यति ।
पर्जन्य इव भूतानां अक्षयो भारतद्रुमः ॥[2]

(b) छायोपजीवी पदकोपजीवी सकलोपजीवी ।
भवेदथ प्राप्तकवित्वजीवी स्वोन्मेषतो वा भुवनोपजीव्यः ॥[3]

Therefore the correct translation of the expression in the Allahabad inscription should be, whose title of 'King of poets' has been established by various poetical compositions, fit to serve as the sources of inspiration for the learned.

**Munshi Diamond Jubilee Commemoration Volume*, I, (Bharatiya Vidya, IX).

Mankuwar Image Inscription of the Reign of Kumāragupta I, Dated 129.

In the first line of this inscription, we have the following sentence : भगवतो(तः) सम्यक्सम्बुद्धस्य स्वमताविरुद्धस्य इयं प्रतिमा प्रतिष्ठापिता भिक्षुबुद्धमित्रेण Dr. Fleet has translated the epithet स्वमताविरुद्ध as "who was never refuted in respect of his tenets." Evidently he has taken it as a *Bahuvrīhi* compound. There are two objections to this interpretation. Firstly, if the compound had been a Bahuvrīhi in the sense which has been attributed to it by Dr. Fleet, अविरुद्ध should have been the first member, *i.e.* the form would have been अविरुद्धस्वमतस्य । Secondly अविरुद्ध does not mean 'uncontroverted'. Etymologically it means simply, 'not contradictory, congruous, consistent *etc.*'. The compound is, as a matter of fact a *Karmadhāraya* and not a *Bahuvrīhi*. It should be expounded as स्वमतश्चासौ अविरुद्धश्च = स्वमताविरुद्धः । तस्य स्वमताविरुद्धस्य ।

The first member स्वमत is to be explained as स्वेन मतं (संस्कृतं)=स्वमतं । This word occurs in the Mathura Pedestal Inscription of the year 14 which runs as follows : संभ्य संबुद्धस्य स्वमतस्य देवस्य पूजार्थं प्रतिमा प्रतिष्ठापयति । R.B. Daya Ram Sahni, who edited this inscription rightly translated स्वमत as 'favourite.'[4]

The second member of the compound *i.e.* अविरुद्ध has a technical meaning here. Its true explanation is afforded by the following passage from the Mahāniddesa :

> विरुद्धो ति यो चित्तस्स आघातो पटिघातो अनुविरोधो कोपो पकोपो समकोपो दोसो पदोसो सम्पदोसो चित्तस्स व्यापत्ति मनोपदोसो चित्तस्स कोधो कुज्झना कुज्झितत्तं दोसो दुस्सिना दुस्सितत्तं व्यापत्ति व्यापज्जना व्यापज्जितत्तं विरोधो पटिविरोधो चण्डिक्कं असुरोप अनत्तमनता चित्तस्स अयं वुच्चति विरोधो । यस्स एसो विरोधो पहीनो समुच्छिन्नो वूपसन्नो पटिपस्सद्धो अभब्बुप्पत्तिको जाणग्गिणा दड्ढो, सो वुच्चति अविरुद्धो ।।[5]

From this passage it is clear that अविरुद्ध is one 'whose vices of the mind have been destroyed by the fire of knowledge'. The compound स्वमताविरुद्धस्य should therefore be translated thus : 'of him who is esteemed by me and who is *aviruddha*.'

In this connection it may also be pointed out that the true import of स्वमिताविरुद्ध as explained above must end the useless speculation with regard to the date of the victory of Vindhyavāsa over his Buddhist adversary Buddhamitra the teacher of Vasubandhu. It has been made clear that the Mankuwar inscription does not refer at all to the unchallenged supremacy of Buddha's tenets upto the year 129, nor does it contain anything that would establish the identity of the donor Buddha mitra, with the celebrated Buddhist *ācārya* as supposed by K.B. Pathak[6] and others. Any attempt to settle the date of Vasubandhu, with the aid of the Mankuwar inscription must therefore prove futile.

Junagadh Rock Inscription of Skandagupta.

In line 11, स्वगुणैरनुपस्कृतैरुदात्तैः पितरं यश्च विशेषयां चकार has been translated by Dr. Fleet as follows : "who confers distinction on (his) father by his own noble qualities which are everything except unpolished." The root वि+√शिष् in the causative form has been used here in the sense of excelling, or surpassing, and not in the sense of conferring distinction. The following parallels will make it clear :

(a) मदनमपि गुणैर्विशेषयन्ती रतिरिव मूर्तिमती विभाति येयम् ।

"Surpassing even the god of love by her excellences, she shines like Rati incarnate."[7]

(b) रक्ताशोकरुचा विशेषितगुणो बिम्बाधरालक्तकः ।[8]

The commentator Kāṭayavema explains it thus : रक्ताशोककुसुमस्य रुचा कान्त्या विशेषितगुणः । विशेषितोऽतिशयितस्तिरस्कृतो गुणो यस्य स तथोक्तः । Both these passages support the sense proposed here.

Further, the word अनुपस्कृतैः has also been translated incorrectly. Of course उपस्कृत does mean, 'polished' in certain contexts. Therefore अनुपस्कृत will mean 'unpolished' and not 'everything except unpolished', as rendered by Dr. Fleet. But the meaning 'unpolished' does not suit the present context, and therefore Dr. Fleet tried to arrive at a suitable meaning in a round about way. But the simple course is to take अनुपस्कृत in the sense of 'unblemished.' In this sense the word has been used in the following verse of the *Manusmṛti*, VII, 98 :

एषोऽनुपस्कृतः प्रोक्तो योधधर्मः सनातनः ।
अस्माद्धर्मान्न च्यवेत क्षत्रियो घ्नन् रणे रिपून् ॥

The commentator Kullūka Bhaṭṭa explains अनुपस्कृत as अविगर्हित । The whole sentence in the inscription should be translated thus : 'and who excelled his father by his noble and unblemished virtues.'

In the same line of this inscription, अविस्मयः has been translated by Dr. Fleet as 'absence of astonishment.' But as a complimentary expression, which it undoubtedly is, the word remains unexpressive if taken in the sense proposed by Dr. Fleet. Here विस्मयः means 'arrogance' and अविस्मयः 'the absence of arrogance.' This meaning is quite familiar to students of Sanskrit literature. The following two examples will suffice :

(a) तपः क्षरति विस्मयात् । *Manusmṛti*, IV, 237.
(b) भाग्यैश्चलैर्विस्मितः । *Svapnavāsavadattam*, I, 3.

Bhitari Stone Pillar Inscription of Skandagupta

In line 6, the first *pāda* of the verse has been read as प्रथितपृथुमतिस्वभावशक्तेः and translated as "of him, who was renowned for the innate power of (his) mighty intellect," by Dr. Fleet. Here the reading स्वभाव is incorrect. In the first conjunct there is no trace of a *v*. The lower letter is a straight horizontal bar, and is evidently a subscript *r*. The upper letter is a *p* and not a *s* as there is no trace of a loop or a hook attached to the left-hand verticle. The first syllable is therefore *pra*, and the word is *prabhāvaśakteḥ*. The whole compound should be translated as, 'of him, whose wide intellect and majestic power are far famed.' *Prabhāvaśaktiḥ* 'the majesty or the pre-eminent position of the king himself,' is one of the three well known 'royal prowesses' *viz*. मंत्रशक्तिः उत्साहशक्तिः and प्रभावशक्तिः, mentioned by ancient Indian writers on political science.

In lines 8-10 Dr. Fleet gives the following text :

विनयबलसुनीतैर्व्विक्रमेण क्र्क्रमेण
    प्रतिदिनमभियोगादीप्सितं येन लब्ध्वा ।
स्वभिमतविजिगीषाप्रोद्यतानां परेषां
    प्रणिहित इव ले[भे सं]विधानोपदेशः ॥

It has been translated by him thus : "By whom—having, with daily intense application, step by step attained his object by means of good behaviour and strength and politic conduct,—instruction in the art of disposition (of resources) was acquired (and) was employed as the means of (subduing his) enemies who had put themselves forward in the desire for conquest that was so highly welcome (to them)."

The reading *lebhe* in the fourth *pāda* is incorrect. On both sides of *l* there are horizontal short bars at the top. This syllable is therefore *lo* and not *le*. The next syllable which is indistinct, should be taken to be *ke*. The word is therefore *loke* and not *lebhe*. With the new reading *loke* the sense also is remarkably improved, while with *lebhe* it had to be brought out in a far-fetched manner as is apparent from Dr. Fleet's translation. There seems to be not much sense in saying that he attained instruction in the art of disposition (of resources) after he had already obtained the cherished objects by training, force, polity and valour !

The verse should be translated thus : 'By whom—having gained (his) cherished object by means of discipline, force, polity and valour in turn, (and) through daily close application (*i.e.* exertion), instruction in planning was laid down in this world for others, (or) the most distinguished of those who are intensely inclined towards their cherished desire for conquest.'

In this translation I have rendered परेषां as 'the most distinguished' following a usage of Kālidāsa in the *Abhijñana Śākuntalam.*[9] The meaning 'laid down' for *praṇihita* is supported by the *Nānārthasaṃgraha* of Ajayapāla.[10]

In lines 14 and 15 the following verse occurs :

[स्वै] हं [ण्डै] [:] [˘ ˘] (?) त्यु [-] त्प्रचलितं वंशं प्रतिष्ठाप्य यो
वाहुभ्यामवनिं विजित्य हि जितेष्वार्तेषु कृत्वा दयाम् ।
नोत्सिक्तो [न] च विस्मित: प्रतिदिनं संवर्धमानद्युतिः
गीतैश्च स्तुतिभिश्च वन्दकन्ज (?) नो (?) यं प्रापयत्यार्य्यताम् ।।

The text of the fourth *pāda* as given here by Dr. Fleet needs reconsideration. The syllable immediately following *Stutibhiś—ca* is not *va* but *vṛ*, the medial *ṛ* being absolutely clear on the original stone. In the next conjunct the upper letter is *t* and not *n*. The lower letter cannot be a *da*, and may be a *ta*. The conjuct is therefore *tta*. The next letter is clearly a *k*, but the letter following is not a *j* at all, as its left portion is curved. In this very record the left portion of a *j* consists of a straight verticle in all cases. This letter is a *tha* and it was recognised as such by Dr. Bhagwanlal Indraji.[11] The next syllable is *nai* and not *no* as the two bars at the top of *n* bend towards the left. If the medial vowel had been *o*, these bars would have been placed in the opposite directions. Thus in place of *vandakajano* we should read *vṛttakathanaiḥ*. After this the next syllable is *yaṃ*. The syllable following this has been read as *prā* by Dr. Fleet and *pre* by Dr. Indraji. The vowel is clearly medial *e* and the lower consonant is of course a subscript *r*. But the middle consonant is not a *p*, as the presence of a hook attached to the right verticle shows that it is a *h*. The syllable is therefore *hre*. The last word in this line is *āryyatā* and not *āryyatāṃ*. There is no trace either of an anusvāra or a final *m*. The corrected text of the fourth *pāda* would stand thus : गीतैश्च स्तुतिभिश्च वृत्तकथनैः यं ह्रेप्यत्यार्य्यता । "whom (his) nobility causes to blush by reason of the narrations of his exploits through songs and eulogies." With Dr. Fleet's reading the sense was rather clumsy. Surely it was not the poet's intention to say that the songs and praises of the bards *raised* Skandagupta to the status of an *ārya* ! That would be a very poor compliment to any patron, by his court poet. The corrected reading brings out the real meaning, namely that Skandagupta was temperamentally so modest that he blushed on hearing the panegyrics of his exploits being sung by the bards.

The Haraha Inscription of the Reign of Īśānavarman.

This inscription has been edited by Dr. Hiranand Shastri.[12] In the third line, the first *pāda* of the fourth verse has been read as follows : तेष्वादौ हरिवर्म्मणोवनिभुजो भूतिर्भुवो भूतये । In the third syllable the consonant is not *d* but *p* as is clear from the presence of the right hand verticle. At the top, there is only one bar bending towards the left. The medial vowel is therefore *e* and not *au* for which we require three bars. This syllable is therefore *pe*. In the eighth syllable, there is again only one vertical bar attached to *ṇ* on its right. This is therefore ṇā and not *ṇo*. In the twelfth syllable again, there is a single vertical bar attached in the middle of *j*. This is therefore *jā* and not *jo*. The whole pāda should read as follows :

तेष्वापे हरिवर्म्मणावनिभुजा भूतिर्भुवो भूतये ।

The Tumain Inscription of Ghaṭotkacagupta.

This inscription has been published by M.B. Garde Esq. in *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. xxvi, p. 115ff. In the first line we have the following sentence : *caraṇakamalaṃ mattyaṃ vandyete siddha-saṅhaiḥ*. Mr. Garde has corrected *mattyaṃ* into *acchaṃ* evidently taking the anusvāra over *la* as superfluous and *ttya*, a mistake for *ccha*. Dr. D.C. Sircar while accepting the emendation suggests that *Kamlamantyaṃ* is a better reading.[13] But I think that the original as it stands is quite correct and there is no need of any emendation. The word *mattyaṃ* means, 'the means of acquiring knowledge'. While commenting on Pāṇinī, iv, 4, 47 (मतजन हलात् करणजल्पकर्षेषु) Bhattoji explains मत्यं as follows : मतं ज्ञानं तस्य करणं भाव: साधनं वा । The word qualifies the lotus-like feet of some deity which is eulogised in the first verse, and the foot is looked upon as the means of attainment of knowledge (*jñāna*). It is not to be construed with Candragupta mentioned next, but evidently with the deity mentioned before.

Notes and References

1. *CII*. III, 15.
2. *Mahābhārata*, I, 92.
3. Kṣemendra, *Kavikaṇṭhābharaṇa*, II, 1.
4. *EI*. XIX, 96-97.
5. *Mahāniddesa*, 239. Our view is fully supported by line 2 of the Mathura Pedestal Inscription of Vāsudeva dated 93, which runs as : स्वमतस्य अविरुद्धस्य प्रतिमा छत्रं च प्रस्थापितं ।*EI*, XXXVII, 151ff.
6. *IA*. 1912, 244, and D.N. Mookerjee, *IC*. IV, 520.
7. *Mṛcchakaṭīka*, IV. 4.
8. *Mālavikāgnimitram*, III, 5a.
9. न त्वया द्रष्टव्यानां परं दृष्टं , Act II.
10. भवेत् प्रणिहितं न्यस्ते । 61.
11. *J BoBrRAS*. XVI, 349-50.
12. *EI*. XIX, 110ff.
13. *Select Inscriptions*, 495, fn. 3.

9

THE DATE OF THE MANKUWAR STONE IMAGE INSCRIPTION OF THE REIGN OF KUMĀRAGUPTA*

This inscription was discovered by Bhagwan Lal Indraji in 1870. He published the text and English translation in the Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, XVI, (1885), 354. It was subsequently published by J.F. Fleet in *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, III, 45-47. It has been finally published in the Second edition of the *C.I.I.*, III, revised by D.R. Bhandarkar and edited by B. Ch. Chhabra and G.S. Gai.

The date of this inscription, expressed in numerical figures has been read as the year 129, the month of Jyeṣṭha, and the 18th day, both by Bhagwan Lal Indraji and J.F. Fleet. It has been accepted as correct by D.R. Bhandarkar, B. Ch. Chhabra and G.S. Gai. Recently, D.C. Sircar has put forward the view that the year in this date is 109 and not 129. He thinks the figure for the years has been given in a mixed notation where the digit for 100 has been written according to the old system of symbols for the various numbers, and after the figure for hundred, we have a dot and then the figure for nine, thus making the date as 109. He argues as follows :

> "The symbol for 20 is expected to have resembled the *Akṣāra tha* which was written in the age of Kumāragupta not as a circle with a central dot as in the earlier period, but as elongated vertically with a horizontal stroke or bar in the middle instead of the dot."[1]

**JESI*

It seems that the Udayagiri Cave inscription dated 106[2] during the rule of the Guptas, has escaped the notice of Sircar. This inscription, as shown by its date clearly falls within the period of the reign of Kumāragupta-I. The earlier type of the letter *tha*, *i.e.*, the one formed by a circle and a central dot within, occurs three times in this record, twice in line 2 as an independent letter and once in line 7 as a conjunct. In both the lines its formation as a circle with a dot in the middle is clear. Therefore, the date of the Mankuwar inscription cannot be altered to 109 on the ground. The symbol for 20 which is like the letter *tha* was not written, during the reign of Kumāragupta I, as a circle with a dot in the middle. The Udayagiri Cave inscription clearly demonstrates the untenability of Sircar's contention. It clearly establishes the fact that even during the reign of Kumāragupta, *tha* was written as a circle with a dot in the middle and could very well be used as a symbol for the numerical figure 20.

On account of the use of the symbol with a fixed value of one hundred, it cannot be conceded that the date has been expressed in the decimal system. In order to overcome this hurdle, Sircar has suggested that the date has been expressed partly according to the old system of fixed values of symbols and partly according to the decimal system where the numerals have place values. But there is not a single instance in the inscriptions of the Gupta period where this mixed system of denoting numbers has been used, either before, during or even after the reign of Kumāragupta-I.

The invention of the zero is generally attributed to the famous Indian astronomer Āryabhaṭa who was born in A.D. 476 and started writing in A.D. 499. The decimal system must be posterior to this date, and we cannot take it back on the basis of the available evidence to the reign of Kumāragupta I *i.e.* A.D. 415 to A.D. 455. It may also be mentioned that the earliest instance of the use of decimal system is to be found in the Sankhed Grant dated Kalachuri saṁvat 346 = A.D. 595.

In passing we may also refer to a statement of Sircar, in this very context. He says, "This kind of influence of the decimal system which became popular at a later date was not known to the earlier writers on Indian epigraphy and palaeography, but we had occasion to notice such cases. "It is really surprising that Sircar has ignored the observations on this very subject, made by two eminent epigraphists. F. Kielhorn pointed long ago to this sort of mixing of the old system of symbols with fixed value with the decimal system.[3] Hultzsch, while editing the Tekkali Copper Plate grant of Indravarman has noted the following inscriptions :[4]

(1) Urlam plates of Hastivarman surnamed Rājasiṁha or Raṇabhīta, year 800=80 in words and figures.
(2) Achyutapuram plates of Indravarman surnamed Rājasiṁha year 807=87.
(3) Parla-Kimedi plates of Indravarman surnamed Rājasiṁha, year 901=91 in words and figures.
(4) Chicacole plates of Indravarman, year 100 20 8 = 128 in figures alone.
(5) Purle plates of Indravarman son of Dānarṇava year 100 37=137.
(6) Tekkali plates of Indravarman son of Dānarṇava, year 100 54 = 154.
(7) Chicacole plates of Devendravarman son of Guṇārṇava, year 100 83 = 183.

In the above list of seven Gaṅga inscriptions we find that in the first four inscriptions the dates 80, 87, 91 and 128 have all been written in the old system of symbols with fixed values, whereas the dates in the last three inscriptions ranging from 137 to 183 have been written in the mixed notation, where the symbol for 100 still has the fixed value, whereas the remaining two digits have been written in the decimal system *i.e.* each digit has its place value. We may conclude therefore that in the records of the Eastern Gaṅgas of Ganjam, the dates from A.D. 576 upto A.D. 624 have been recorded in the old system of symbols with fixed values, whereas the dates from A.D. 633 to A.D. 679 have been written in the so called mixed system.[5]

From the account given above, it is clear that the dates in the Gaṅga records upto A.D. 624 were recorded in the old system of expressing numbers by symbols having fixed values, and it was only sometimes about A.D. 633 when the 'mixed system' made its first appearance. Therefore our stand that the decimal system came into vogue sometimes after the time of the astronomer Āryabhaṭa stands vindicated; and Sircar's proposition that the date in the Mankuwar inscription of Kumāragupta I's reign has been recorded partly in the old system according to which the figure 100 has been denoted by a symbol with a fixed value and the figure 9 has been given the place value according to the decimal system should be regarded as untenable. The date of the Mankuwar inscription therefore stands as given by Bhagwan Lal Indraji and Fleet and endorsed by B. Ch. Chhabra and G.S Gai.[6]

Notes and References

1. *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, Calcutta University, III, 133ff.
2. Fleet, J.F., *C.I.I.*, III, 258ff., Plate XXVIII A.
3. Kielhorn, F., List of Inscriptions of Northern India, Appendix to *EI*, V, p. 91, f. n. 7.
4. *EI*, XVIII, 308.
5. In calculating the equivalent Christian year for the Gaṅga dates, the year A.D. 496 has been taken as the epoch of the Gaṅga Era, as accepted by Sircar himself, vide the Classical Age, Ed. R.C. Majumdar and A.D. Pusalkar, 216.
6. *CII*, III, revised edition ed. Chhabra, B. Ch. and Gai, G. S., 1981, 292, f.n. 2.

10

THE PUṢYAMITRAS OF THE BHITARI PILLAR INSCRIPTION*

The Bhitari stone pillar inscription records Skandagupta's victory over a powerful enemy called the Puṣyamitras, who possessed a strong army and a rich treasury.[1] The identification of these Puṣyamitras has been a rather difficult problem. Fleet identified them with the people mentioned in the Purāṇas and located them on the Narmadā,[2] while V.A. Smith regarded them as a people of the North.[3] Hoernle believed that they were the same as the Maitrakas.[4] R.D. Banerji regarded them as the first wave of the Hūṇas.[5] H.R. Divekar suggested the reading *Yudhy=amitrān* in place of Puṣyamitras. But, as pointed out by R. D. Banerji, the proposed reading is impossible.[7] I have myself examined the inscription on the original stone, and in my opinion while the first syllable may be *pu* or *yu*, the next syllable cannot be *dhya*. Over the subscript *y* there are clear traces of a square form. It is not cylindrical, in shape, as would be the form of *dh*. It can only be *p* or *ṣ*. But as *p* makes an impossible word *pupya* the choice is evidently restricted to *ṣ* and we get *puṣya*. Divekar's suggestion is thus disposed of. Recently N.K. Bhattasali has suggested that the Puṣyamitras are the descendants of king Puṣyavarmā of Assam.[8] He rejects the identification with the people mentioned in the Purāṇas on the ground that the latter belonged to the north-west and ruled in the third century A.D. and 'can hardly be taken to be the people who gave trouble to Skandagupta'. In his opinion, the term Puṣyamitra, upon which he thinks there is a pun (śleṣa) has been used for 'the descendants of Puṣyavarmā of Assam who had so long been

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mitras or friends of the Guptas, but had changed into foes by their (विजिगीषा or) desire for conquest, and had invaded the Gupta empire from the east and made it totter'. Bhattasali thinks that Mahendravarmā, whom he assigns to the period A.D. 450 to 490 who performed two horse-sacrifices must have been powerful enough to launch an attack on the Gupta empire in the reign of Skandagupta. This conclusion of Bhattasali is open to several objections.

Firstly as remarked by D.C. Sircar, 'there is no grammatical, lexicographical, or literary support' for this interpretation of the name Puṣyamitra. Secondly the contemporaniety of Skandagupta and Mahendravarmā cannot be upheld, as will be presently shown. The mere fact that he performed two horse-sacrifices cannot prove his capacity to throw the gauntlet to the Imperial Guptas. The definite limits of Skandagupta's reign are from A.D. 455 to A.D. 467. The period of the rule of Mahendravarmā however, cannot be so definitely fixed because we do not possess any dated records of his reign. As a matter of fact the entire chronology of the kings of Assam can be settled only approximately by means of synchronisms and rough calculations. One basis for the construction of the chronology of the dynasty of Puṣyavarmā is furnished by the Bargaṅgā Rock inscription of the reign of Bhūtivarmā,[9] the grandson of Mahendravarmā. Bhattasali read the date in this record as 234, but as pointed out by D.C. Sircar it is clearly 244.[10] The numerical symbol for 30 is like the letter *l*, and there is not the slightest resemblance between *l* and the numerical symbol in the Bargaṅgā Rock inscription. George Bühler has remarked that the numerical symbol for 40 is like a *pta* or a *sa* through the transposition of the *ta*.[11]

The present symbol exactly resembles the second symbol for 40 mentioned by Bühler. The Bargaṅgā inscription therefore supplies the date A.D. 563 for the reign of Bhūtivarmā. It should also be carefully noted that 563 is not definitely the last date of Bhūtivarmā but only a date, falling within his reign. He might have ruled for several years after A.D. 563. Now, if Skandagupta and Mahendravarmā were contemporaries as assumed by Bhattasali, we shall have to place the latter between A.D. 455 and 467, the definitely known limits of

Skandagupta's reign. It means that we have to assign a period of 108 years (455 to 563) to the two reigns of Mahendravarmā and his son Nārāyaṇavarmā and part of the reign of Bhūtivarmā. This will give us an average of more than forty years for each of the two reigns of Mahendravarmā and Nārāyaṇavarmā, which is obviously an unusually long average. Even for the most powerful of the Imperial Guptas, *i.e.* Candragupta I to Kumāragupta I, we get an average of thirtyfour years only. There is yet another piece of evidence showing that Skandagupta and Mahendravarmā could not have been contemporaries. This is the synchronism between Susthitavarmā king of Assam, and Mahāsenagupta of the later Gupta family. From the Aphsad inscription of Ādityasena, we know that Mahāsenagupta inflicted a defeat on Susthitavarmā on the banks of the river Lauhitya. On the basis of this statement we can draw the following synchronistic table :

Guptas of Magadha	*Kings of Assam*
Kṛṣṇagupta	Mahendravarmā
Harṣagupta	Nārāyṇavarmmā.
Jīvitagupta	Bhūtivarmā
Kumāragupta	Candramukhavarmā
Dāmodaragupta	Sthiravarmā
Mahāsenagupta	Susthitavarmā.

Thus we find that Mahendravarmā was the contemporary of the later Gupta king Kṛṣṇagupta, who could have established an independent kingdom, only after the decline of the Imperial Gupta dynasty, sometimes after the death of Budhagupta who held the empire in tact up to *c.* A.D. 495. Kṛṣṇagupta's rise to power therefore must be posterior to A.D. 495. Thus Mahendravarmā whom we have shown to be a contemporary of Kṛṣṇagupta, flourished long after the reign of Skandagupta. The year A.D. 490 may be approximately taken as the first year of Mahendravarmā's rule and not the last year as Bhattasali takes it. If there was any clash between the kings of Assam and the Imperial Guptas previous to the reign of Mahendra the aggressors must have been the Guptas and not the kings of Assam. The Damodarpur Copper Plates afford unimpeachable evidence of Budhagupta's rule over Puṇḍravardhana, quite in the neighbourhood of Assam. In the Nālandā seal of Bhāskaravarman, the kings from Puṣyavarmā to Kalyāṇavarmā bear the title of *Mahārājādhirāja* but that title is dropped from the time of the next king Gaṇapativarmā. It is relevant to inquire why Gaṇapativarmā has not been styled as a *Mahārājādhirāja* ? Does it not indicate an eclipsing his power ? From the Gupta-Varman synchronism as shown in the following synchronistic table we can see that Budhagupta whose rule extended over Puṇḍravardhana was a contemporary of Gaṇapativarmā.

Imperial Guptas	*Varmans of Assam*
Samudragupta	Puṣyavarmā[12]
Candragupta II	Samudravarmā
Kumāragupta	Balavarmā
Skandagupta	Kalyāṇavarmā
Purugupta	
Narasiṃhagupta	
Budhagupta	Gaṇapativarmā

It is not improbable that there was a clash between Budhagupta and Gaṇapativarmā in which the latter suffered a reverse, and being reduced to the position of a feudatory the use of the higher title of *Mahārājādhirāja* had to be discarded. From the foregoing discussion it must be clear that an attack on the Gupta empire by the Varmans of Assam in the reign of Skandagupta is an impossibility and the Puṣyamitras of the Bhitari Pillar inscription cannot be identified as the descendants of Puṣya who were friends (*mitras*).

The Puṣyamitras cannot be a branch of the Huṇas as held by R.D. Banerji. The Hūṇas have been mentioned separately in the Bhitari inscription.[13] Moreover it is hardly to be conceived that the very first wave of the foreign barbaric invaders would have been given a purely Sanskritic name by the Indian writer of the epigraphic record. Evidently the author of the inscription has mentioned two different adversaries of Skandagupta who suffered defeat from him on two different occasions.

Hoernle's final in this connection was that the Puṣyamitras were "the same as Maitrakas who some years later under the leadership of Bhatārka established themselves in Valabhī probably with the help of the Hūṇa ruler Toramaṇā."[14] But as shown by the present writer the Maitrakas remained subservient to the Imperial Guptas from the time of Bhatārka to that of Droṇasiṃha.[15] Therefore they cannot be the same as Puṣyamitras who rebelled against Skandagupta.

The Purāṇas mention a people called Puṣyamitras, whose rule commenced after the end of the dynasty of the Vindhyakas. In the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* Mss consulted by Prof. Wilson we have the following statement, "and Puṣyamitras, and Paṭumitras and others to the number of thirteen will rule over Mekalā."[16]

Wilson has added the following note. "It seems most correct to separate the thirteen sons or families of the Vindhya princes from these Bāhlikas and then from the Puṣyamitras and Paṭumitras who governed Mekalā, a country on the Narmadā."[17] A similar statement is to be found in the *Vāyupurāṇa* which is generally regarded as one of the oldest and most reliable of Purāṇa texts. It says :

पुष्यमित्राः भविष्यन्ति पटुमित्रास्त्रयोदश ।
मेकलायां नृपाः सप्त भविष्यन्तीह सप्ततिम् ॥

Thus according to the *Vāyupurāṇa*, the *Puṣyamitras* and *Paṭumitras* are grouped with the rulers of Mekalā, whose seven kings have not been named. It was on the basis of such evidence that Fleet came to the following conclusion :

"It seems likely that the Puṣyamitras are to be placed in Central India somewhere in the country along the banks of Narmadā."[18] Bhattasali objects to the identification of the Puṣyamitras of the inscription with those of the Purāṇas, on the plea that the latter "appear to have been of North-Western India, and Pargiter has placed them in the third century A.D. They can hardly be taken to be the people who gave trouble to Skandagupta and made the Gupta empire totter by the middle of the 5th century A.D." But the presumption that they belonged to the north-west, is evidently based on the mention of the Bāhlikas, earlier in the same passage. This is hardly any proof. The mention of Vindhyakas, evidently a people of the Vindhya region, and of Mekalā, points to the south, rather than to north-west. As regards the date of the Puṣyamitras, from the Purāṇas, we can only have an indication of the time of the rise of these powers. That Mekalā continued to be ruled by its own kings either quite independent or feudatories up to the end of the fifth century A.D. is apparent from the following statement made with reference to the Vākāṭaka monarch Narendrasena, in the Balaghat Copper Plate of his son Pṛthiviṣeṇa. कोसलमेकलामालवाधिपत्यभ्यर्च्चितशासनस्य ।[19] Narendrasena was a contemporary of Skandagupta. The existence of the kingdom of Mekalā, in the days of Skandagupta is thus a certainty.[20] There seems to be no reason, therefore, to assume that the Puṣyamitras of the Purāṇas must have come to an end in the third century A.D. Just like the Mekalās they seem to have continued down to the middle of the fifth century A.D. It is quite likely, that finding the hands of the Gupta emperors quite full, owing to the Hūṇa war, the Puṣyamitras tried to extend their own kingdom at the expense of the Guptas. An indication of a serious disorder in the region, about this very time is furnished by the Bamnala hoard of coins recently brought to light by D. B. Diskalkar.[21] The hoard was evidently buried towards the close of the reign of Kumāragupta I, as it contained coins of Samudragupta, Candragupta II, and Kumāragupta I only. Besides the coins, the hoard contained a gold bar. D. B. Diskalkar, rightly remarks that the bar had been made probably by melting some ornaments, on account of the apprehension of some immediate danger. The village of Bamnala is 24 miles to the south of the Narmadā. Thus there is clear proof of a serious disturbance of peace in the vicinity of Mekalā, in the middle of the fifth century A.D. and Fleet was perfectly justified in placing the Puṣyamitras of the Bhitari inscription in that region.

1. समुदितबलकोषान् पुष्यमित्रांश्च जित्वा । *CII*, III, 53-54.
2. *IA*. 1889, 228.
3. *EHI*, (4 ed.) 326.
4. *JRAS*., 1909, 126.
5. *Age of the Imperial Guptas*, 46.
6. *ABORI*., I. 99.
7. *Age of the Imperial Guptas*, 45.
8. *IHQ*., XXI, 24f.
9. *Journal of the Assam Research Society*, VIII, (N.S.), 138ff.
10. *ibid*., X, 62.
11. *Indian Palaeography*, translated by Dr. J.F. Fleet, 81.
12. It may be noted that Dr. Bhattasali questions the contemporaneity of Samudragupta and Puṣyavarmā. He says, "Naming an inferior relation like son after one's liege-lord would hardly be taken as a compliment by that liege-lord." But Puṣyavarmā was not a mere feudatory of Samudragupta, as the former's title of *Mahārājādhirāja shows*. He was only a friendly neighbour who maintained amicable relations with the Imperial Gupta monarch. The statement of Samudragupta's panegyrist has not to be taken literally. Some discount must be made for the natural tendency towards exaggeration. And what if Puṣyavarmā had named his son as Samudravarmā, before he entered into diplomatic relations with the Guptas ? The objection loses all force.
13. हूणैर्यस्य समागतस्य समरे दोर्भ्यां धरा कम्पिता । line 15.
14. *JRAS*., 1909, 126. Previously he held that Bhaṭārka had beaten back Toramāṇa. *JASB*., 1889, 97-98.
15. *IC*., V, 407ff.
16. Wilson's translation of the *Viṣṇupurāṇā*, IV, 212-13.
17. *ibid*., 215n.
18. *IA*, 1889, 228.
19. *EI*, IX, 267.
20. Dr. B. Ch. Chhabra has recently discovered a copper plate grant of Mahārāja Bharatabala ruler of Mekalā, and has assigned it to *c*. A.D. 435-470.
21. *JNSI*, V. 135ff.

11

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE BHITARI STONE PILLAR INSCRIPTION OF SKANDAGUPTA*

The Bhitari Stone Pillar inscription is a very important source of information about the Gupta emperor Skandagupta. Unfortunately, the surface of the stone has become very much worn out by the effects of wind and weather through almost fifteen centuries, with the result that, at places, the text has become difficult to make out. The earliest attempts to decipher this record were made by Bhau Daji and Bhagwan Lal Indraji. It was finally edited by Fleet in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* (*CII*), vol. III. Not being satisfied with some of the readings of Fleet, the present writer made three trips to Bhitari in 1934, 1935 and 1943 and the results of these efforts were published in the *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Lahore Session (1940), and *K.M. Munshi Diamond Jubilee Number of Bhāratīya Vidyā*, IX (1948).

In the last issue of the *Vīshveshvaranand Indological Journal*, XVI (1978) 74-87, V.C. Pandey has discussed the text and translation of some portions of this inscription. Some of his views need further discussion. He has rightly suggested that in Fleet's reading *prathita-pṛthumati-svabhāva-śakteḥ*, it is likely that the word *svabhāva* is a mistake for *prabhāva*. His conjecture is perfectly correct. The reading on the original stone is definitely *prabhāva*, as pointed out by me long ago.[1]

Pandey is, however, on thinner ice in commenting on Fleet's reading and translation of line 15 which runs as : *gītaiś=ca stutibhiś=ca vandaka-ja* (?) *no* (?) *yaṃ prā* (?) *payaty=āryyatām* [II*].

**VIJ*, XVII (1979).

It must be said to Fleet's credit, that he has expressed his doubt regarding the reading of the two crucial words, the subject *vandakajano* and the verb *prāpayatī*, as he takes them. He has translated this line as, "whom the bards raise to distinction with (their) songs and praises."[2] A moment's reflection on this rendering would at once bring out its incompatibility. The Bhitari inscription is an official document which records the installation of an image of Viṣṇu and the grant of a village to the idol by Skandagupta. Obviously, the inscription must have been composed by a court poet. Therefore, it cannot even be imagined that such a writer would ever make a statement which may even remotely be derogatory for the august personality of the writer's patron. But if we accept Fleet's text and translation we are placed in a situation which is exactly akin to an aspersion on Skandagupta, in as much as it would mean that it were only the eulogies of the bards which conferred 'distinction' on him, whereas, in reality, he did not possess any merit ! It is preposterous to assume that any court poet would have the temerity to make a public statement which would cast a reflection on his patron.

Pandey's explanation is even a greater insinuation. He has suggested that, "It means 'the Ārya status' to which Skandagupta was raised by the songs and panegyrics of bards." Referring to Skandagupta's mother, Pandey says, "She seems to have belonged to an *avaravarṇa*". This explains why her son, Skandagupta, was probably regarded as of *anārya* birth by a section of the orthodox people. These notions about his low descent were repudiated by the bards through their songs and panegyrics.

But the fundamental question is whether any court poet could even covertly refer to it even if it were a fact, which, in reality, it is not. There is no evidence whatsoever to show that Skandagupta's mother was not a *mahādevī*,[3] much less to show that she belonged to an *avaravarṇa*. Moreover, no stigma was attached to inter-caste marriages in ancient India, particularly in the case of royal marriages. A daughter of the western Kṣatrapa Rudradāma, a Śaka ruler, was married to a Sātavāhana prince, an orthodox Brahman, and a daughter of Candragupta II Vikramāditya, born of his Nāga queen Kuberanāgā, was married in the royal family of orthodox Brāhmaṇa of the south, the Vākāṭakas. She also became the chief-queen of the Vākāṭaka emperor Rudrasena II. Further, according to the *Mahābhārata* adage वृत्तेन हि भवत्यार्यो न घनेन न च विद्यया । 'One becomes an *ārya* by good conduct alone, neither by wealth nor by learning'. Even, admitting, for the sake of argument, that the emperor's mother belonged to an *avaravarṇa*, it has to be conceded that no poet belonging to the royal court would have even remotely referred to such a fact.

As a matter of fact, there would be no room for such speculation, the moment we hit upon the correct reading of the two crucial words in this line. Firstly, what has been read as *prāpayati* by Fleet, is in reality *hrepayati*, being the casual form of the root ह्री (लज्जायां) 'to blush'. The second reading of Fleet which is untenable is *vandaka-ja (?) no (?)*. The first syllable of this word is *vṛ*, and not simple *va*. The second syllable is blurred, and about the third there is no dispute that it is *ka*. The fourth has been taken to be *ja* by Fleet, but with a question mark. He was not sure about it. Bhagwan Lal Indraji[4] read it as *tha*, and I think he is right. The last syllable is *naiḥ*. Now, if we supply *tta* as the second syllable which is blurred, we shall get the word *vṛttakathanaiḥ*. The whole line should therefore be read as under :

गीतैश्च स्तुतिभिश्च वृ[त्त]कथनैः यं ह्रेपयत्यार्य्यता ।

Now, it can be translated as, "Whom (his innate) nobility causes to blush by means of the rehearsals of the true account of his exploits (*vṛtta*) through songs and panegyrics." The idea of a truly great hero blushing at the recital of the eulogistic compositions seems to have been a popular poetic motif in the Gupta age. Kālidāsa has used such a motif, thrice in the *Raghuvaṃśa* alone. Speaking of Śatrughna's embarrassment when the sages praised him for having destroyed the demon Lavaṇa, Kālidāsa says :

तस्य संस्तूयमानस्य चरितार्थैस्तपस्विभिः ।
शुशुभे विक्रमोदग्रं व्रीडयावनतं शिरः ।।

(*Raghuvaṃśa*, 15. 27)

"When he was being eulogised by the ascetics whose object had been accomplished, his head, high by virtue of his prowess, was bowed down on account of shyness."

Again, writing about King Atithi, Kālidāsa writes :

स्तूयमानः स जिह्राय स्तुत्यमेव समाचरन् ।
तथापि ववृधे तस्य तत्कारिद्वेषिणो यशः ।।

(*Raghuvaṃśa*, 17.73)

"Although performing only what was praiseworthy, he felt shy when being eulogised. Even then his fame was augmented, (though) he disliked those who performed that function, *i e*., praised him)."

Finally, speaking of Śila, Kālidāsa has stated :

तस्याभवत्सूनुरुदारशीलः शिलः शिलापट्टविशालवक्षाः ।
जितारिपक्षोऽपि शिलिमुखैर्यः शालीनतामव्रजदीड्यमानः ।।

(*Raghuvaṃśa*, 18. 17)

"His son of noble character was Śila, whose chest was broad like a stone-slab, who, though he had conquered the ranks of his enemies, by (the use of) arrows, felt shy, when praised."

Notes and References

1. *K.M. Munshi Diamond Jubilee Volume* : *Bharatiya Vidya*, IX (1948) 282.
2. *CII*, III, 56.
3. See the present author's paper in the *ABORI*, 48-49 (Golden Jubilee Volume), (1968) 325-27.
4. *J.Bo.Br.RAS*, XVI (1885), 350.

12

A DISPUTED READING IN THE BHITARI STONE PILLAR INSCRIPTION OF SKANDAGUPTA*

The Bhitari Stone Pillar Inscription of Skandagupta is a very important historical document which throws considerable new light on the history of the reign of the Imperial Gupta ruler Skandagupta. His wars with the Hūṇas and Puṣyamitras are known only from this record. This inscription has been edited and published a number of times.[1] The latest edition being the one by B. Ch. Chhabra.[2]

Unfortunately, the stone has become very much weather-beaten and has peeled off at several places. Consequently, the text is not easily legible at some places and is, altogether, lost at others. None of the lithographs published are satisfactory, and the one in Fleet's Volume is no exception. Therefore, for any fresh consideration of the text one must either have a good mechanical estampage or examine the original stone. The present study is based on both of these sources.[3]

In line 15, the last quarter of verse 7, has been read by Fleet as follows:

gītaiś =ca stutibhiś = ca vandaka-ja(?)*no*(?) *yaṁ prā*(?) *payaty= āryyatām.*

He has translated it thus: "Whom the bards raise to distinction with (their) songs and praises.[4]

While teaching the inscription to my post-graduate students, I felt doubtful about the accuracy of Fleet's reading and the apparent impropriety of the statement about Skandagupta's high personality. As a result of my sustained examination of the record, I substituted

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**VIJ*, XX (1982).

the following in place of Fleet's reading : गीतैश्च स्तुतिभिश्च वृत्तकथनैः यं ह्रेपयत्यार्य्यता ।।[5]

V.C. Pandey has recently expressed his doubts about my new reading. He says, "the earlier stamps and impressions of the inscription make it abundantly clear that the reading *vṛttakathana* is not at all possible, that the second letter in this word is more akin to *da* than any other letter and the first letter of the last word in this line is more likely to be *pra* than *hre* or *khyā*. The use of the word *vṛttakathanaiḥ* as also of *vṛttakathane* in Sanskrit literature appear superfluous in company with *gītaiḥ* and *stutibhiḥ*."[6]

As already stated above, the facsimiles so far published are not at all satisfactory, for determining the doubtful readings. The desired result can be achieved only by the study of a good estampage or by an examination of the original stone. As a result of my repeated examination of the original stone as well as on the basis of the estampage in my possession, I can confidently say that the first letter *v* has also a ligature which is clearly a *ṛ* on the stone, so it is *vṛ* and not simply *va*. The second letter which Pandey thinks to be a *nda*, has below the top mark a curve to the left and also a trace of another curve to the right, making it a *t*. Below the right curve of this *t*, there is a clear trace which in shape resembles a subscript *t*. The result of this scrutiny is that this conjunct is not *nda* as read by Fleet but simply *tta*. There is no dispute about the next letter which has been read as *ka* by all. The next letter has been read by Fleet as *ja* with a question mark against it, which means that even he had a doubt about its accuracy. On a close examination, the letter appears to be rounded at the top. This rules out the possibility of its being a *ja*, as the left hand straight vertical line and a horizontal bar at the bottom needed in a *ja* are altogether absent. In its place we have a curve, bending towards the right. This letter is like a *tha*.[7] The next letter is clearly *n* with the ligature *e* formed by elongating the top mark towards the left. There is no second stroke at its top. So this letter is *ne* and not *no*. The result of this detailed examination is the reading *vṛttakathane*.

More crucial is the following word—whether it is *prāpayati* as read by Fleet or *hrepayati* as read by me. The ligature in the syllable which Fleet has read as *prā* can never be the medial *ā*, which is attached either horizontally on the right or vertically at the top. Here it is a slanting bar bending towards the left and is, therefore, clearly the medial *e*. The conjunct consonant has a subscript *r* there is no dispute about it. But the upper consonant has a hook attached at the top of its right hand vertical. Therefore, this consonant is evidently a *h* and not *p*. The whole syllable, therefore, is *hre* and not *prā* and the word consequently emerges out as *hrepayati*. The next word *āryyatā* has no *anusvāra* over it. Hence it is not an accusative but a nominative form. The line, therefore, stands as गीतैश्च स्तुतिभिश्च वृत्तकथने यं ह्रेपयत्यार्य्यता. It may be translated as, 'whom his (innate) nobility causes to blush during the recital of his exploits by means of songs and eulogies'. Only this is the sensible reading. With Fleet's reading, we get the absurd idea that it is only the eulogies of his bards which make Skandagupta an *āryya*, implying, thereby, that in reality he was not an *āryya*. Can we imagine, that a poet of Skandagupta's court itself would dare to cast such an aspersion on his patron ? Will any bard sing such a song either in the presence or even in the absence of his patron king ? Most certainly not. Pandey thinks that *hrepayati* is not good Sanskrit. But as already pointed out by me[8] the verb ह्री has been used exactly in the same sense in a similar context by a writer of the eminence of Kālidāsa.[9] Speaking about King Atithi, Kālidāsa says, स्तूयमानः स जिह्राय स्तुत्यमेव समाचरन्.

'Performing only that which was praiseworthy, he felt shy when being praised.' Prof. Pandey says further, that the King can be said to blush only when he was praised in his presence. That is what the writer of the inscription exactly means, *viz.*, when Skandagupta is praised by his bards, he feels shy. The presence is obviously implied. We can point to parallel passages where a king even when praised in remote places is said to feel shy. In the Khalimpur Copper Plate of Dharmapāladeva, verse No. 13 runs as follows :

गोपैः सीम्नि वनेचरैर्वनभुवि ग्रामोपकण्ठे जनैः
क्रीडद्भिः प्रतिचत्वरे शिशुगणैः प्रत्यापणं मानवैः
लीलावेश्मनि पञ्जरोदरशुकैरुद्गीतमात्मस्तवम्
यस्याकर्ण्णयतस्त्रपाविवलितानम्रं सदैवाननम् ।।

"Whose face is always turned aside and bent, while hearing his eulogy being sung by the guards on the frontiers, by the foresters in the forest land, by the people in the vicinity of the village, by the hosts of children playing in every square, by the men in every market, and by the parrots inside their cages in the chamber of amorous sport."

We would again like to emphasise that no court poet or official chronicler as the writer of the Bhitari inscription obviously is–or even any other writer–could have had the temerity to suggest even remotely, much less in an official record of permanent character, that there was inferiority of any sort attaching to the sovereign ruler who had raised that monument in honour of Viṣṇu and had made the grant of a village for its maintenance. The question of Skandagupta's claim to the throne being legitimate or otherwise quite apart,[10] it is veritably unthinkable that the author of the Bhitari inscription who has paid the highest compliments to Skandagupta by calling him as *Gupta=vaṁś=aikavīraḥ*–the sole hero of the Gupta lineage–could have included even the remotest hint of his not being an *āryya* in his own right.

Notes and References

1. (a) By Rev. W.H. Mill, *JBAS*, VI, 1ff. and Plate xxxii in Vol. V;
   (b) Alexander Cunningham, *ASI*, I (1871), 98, Pl. xxx;
   (c) Bhau Daji, *J. Bo.Br RAS*, X (1875), 59;
   (d) Bhagwan Lal Indraji, *J. Bo.Br. RAS*, xvi, 349ff;
   (e) *C.I.I.*, III, 52ff. and Plate VII.
2. *C.I.I.*, III, revised by Dr. Bhandarkar and ed. by B. Ch. Chhabra and G.S. Gai, Delhi, 1981.
3. I have visited Bhitari thrice—August, 1934; December, 1934; and January, 1943. I also obtained a good estampage through the kind courtesy of the then Jt. Director General of Archaeology in India, Pandit Madho Sarup Vatsa.
4. *C.I.I.*, III, 55-56.
5. *K.M. Munshi Diamond Jubilee Commemoration Volume*, Part I (*BV*, IX), 282.
   This reminds us of Kālidāsa's पूर्ववृत्तकथिते: in Raghuvaṁśa, XI, 10.
   I am now inclined to agree with Prof. Sadhu Ram that instead of *vṛttakathanaiḥ* we should read *vṛttakathane*, as the second top stroke required to make the ligature as an *ai* is not visible in my estampage.

6. *VIJ.*, XVIII (*Prof. K.V. Sarma Felicitation Volume*), 436.
7. Bhagwan Lal Indraji also read it as *tha*, *J. Bo. Br. RAS*, XVI, 349-50.
8. *VIJ.*, XVII.
9. *Raghuvaṁśa*, XVII, 73; and *ibid.*, XVIII. 17, which runs as follows :

   तस्याभवत् सूनुरुदारशीलः शिलः शिलापट्टविशालवक्षाः ।
   जितारिपक्षोऽपि शिलीमुखैर्यः शालीनतामव्रजदीड्यमानः ।।

   Mallinātha commenting on this verse explains शालीनता as लज्जा and the *Amarakoṣa* has, "स्यादधृष्टे तु शालीनः".
10. The suggestion of P.L. Gupta (*JIH*, XL, 243 ff) that Skandagupta was the son of a humble Śūdra concubine, has been very ably refuted, already by Sadhu Ram in *VIJ.*, IV, 72.

13

A READING IN THE BHITARI STONE PILLAR INSCRIPTION OF SKANDAGUPTA

In line 16 of the Bhitari Stone Pillar Inscription of Skandagupta, the text, towards the close of the line, has been read by Fleet as *Śrotresu Gāṅgadhvaniḥ*. However, a careful examination of the original record on the stone as well as on the estampage of this inscription shows that there is a short vertical stroke over the conjunct *ṅga*. This vertical stroke is obviously for a superscript *r*. So the syllable is not simply *ṅga*, but *rṅga*. As the engraving is shallow and the stone is much weather-beaten it is no wonder that even Fleet's keen observation missed to note this superscript *r*. Now if we examine the preceding letter which has been read by Fleet as *gā*, we find that the thickness of the top curve, reveals that there was a cross bar inside the curve which has become indistinct. This letter was therefore a *śā* and not *gā*. Thus we get the word Śārṅga instead of Gāṅga. Śārṅga goes well with the following *dhvaniḥ* and we get a mention here of the sound of the bow, which quite suits the context as we have in this line an account of one of the wars waged by Skandagupta. I had occasion to point out this correction in my paper published in the Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Lahore 1940.

Recently Tripathi has criticised my reading,[1] but his criticism is based neither on a fresh examination of the original record nor a fresh estampage, but merely on a literary reference which Tripathi has come across in the *Rājataraṅgiṇi* of Kalhaṇa. The verse describes a conflagration and is as follows :

दीर्घंदारुग्रन्थिभङ्गजन्मा चटचटारवः । ताप प्रक़ाथ्यमानाभ्रगङ्गाघोष इवोद्ययो ॥[2]

> "The cracking sounds produced by the breaking up of the joints of the long wooden beams, went up like the noise of the *heavenly* Ganges, which had been set boiling by the heat (of the fires on the earth)."

Tripathi feels sure that my correction of Fleet's reading was due to the mere fact that I was not aware of the existence of the noise of the Ganges in the context of battles. He has gone to the length of saying that I would not have cast a second look on this reading, had I known that *Gāṅgadhvani* was a familiar phenomenon in Sanskrit *Kāvyas*. However I may state that not only did I cast a second look but a third and a fourth one. Thrice I have visited Bhitari to examine the text of this inscription and over and above I requested the then Director General of Archaeology to supply me a good estampage which he so kindly did. Now coming to Tripathi's own suggestion regarding the mention of Ganges roar in Sanskrit *Kāvyas* referred to by him refer to the celestial Ganges where the wars between the gods and the demons were fought. They do not refer to the terrestrial Ganges, where, as in the present context we have a description of a battle on this *terra firma*. The Sanskrit Kāvyas like the Kirātārjuniya and the Śiśupālavadha which give lengthy descriptions of the battles fought on this earth make no mention of the terrestrial or celestial Ganges.

Now coming to the verse from the *Rājataraṅgiṇi*, Tripathi has perhaps missed to note that this verse does not contain a statement of fact, or putting it in technical language it is not a *Vṛttetivṛtta*. On the other hand it is what the rhetoricians call *utprekṣā* or 'poetic fancy'. The poet says that the noise of the burning wood appeared as if it was the noise of the boiling waters of the celestial Ganges heated by the fire below on the earth. We have an element of the figure of speech called *Atiśayokti* or hyperbole. This verse therefore does not refer to any actual noise of the waters but only to the crackling of the wood which has been poetically likened to the boiling waters of the celestial Ganges.

Tripathi has hesitatingly tried to connect the reference in the Bhitari inscription with the heavenly Ganges. He refers to the doubtful syllables *nabhisu*. First of all the existence of such a reading is doubtful. Even if we admit it for the sake of argument, it is not correct Sanskrit word which should have been *nabhasi*. The author of this inscription is a poet of great talent, and we can not expect such barbaric expressions from his pen. As a matter of fact the inscription is so badly damaged in this part that the readings are highly doubtful and Fleet put question marks with respect to these.

Lastly it is not even possible to refer it to the terrestrial Ganges. The battle which is described was the one fought with the Hūṇas. In the time of Skandagupta the Hūṇas never penetrated into any part of India near the Ganges. From the Junagadh rocks inscription, we learn about Skandagupta's great anxiety about the province of Surashtra. That appears to have been a vulnerable zone. The Hūṇas appear to have tried to enter India by the Bolan pass, like the Śakas long before them. Thus there appears to be no occasion whatsoever for the poet to refer to the roar of the Ganges flowing in the Uttarapradesh.

Notes and References

1. *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1978, 1010ff.
2. *Rāj*, VIII, 982.

14

SOME PROBLEMS OF THE BHITARI PILLAR INSCRIPTION

As is well-known the Bhitari Stone Pillar Inscription of Skandagupta is a very important historical document. Unfortunately it has suffered much damage on account of the wear and tear caused by wind and weather, and the letters have become indistinct at several places. The most serious damage has occurred in line 16 to 18 by the peeling off of the stone, causing lacunae in the text where important historical information had been given. The present writer has had occasion to correct the text in lines 10, 11 and 15. Similarly in lines 17 and 18 verse no. 10 has presented problem of reading and interpretation. The verse had been read by J.F. Fleet as follows :

[Karttavyā] pratimā kāchit=pratimāṁ tasya-Śārṅgiṇaḥ
s[u] pratītaś=chakār=emāṁ y[āvad=āchandratārakam] [?*]

He translated it thus, "(saying to himself that) an image of some kind or other (should be made) he, the very celebrated one, made this image of that (famous) (god) Sārṅgin (to endure as long as the moon and stars may last).[1]

Here it must be pointed out that the stone has entirely peeled off at two places. In the beginning of the first *pāda* of this verse the word *Karttavyā*; and the entire fourth *pāda—yāvad=āchandratārakam* are entirely Fleet's own restorations. D.R. Bhandarkar, who revised Fleet's work which has now been published after being edited by B.Ch. Chhabra and G.S. Gai, has made different restorations,[2] at both the places. He reads *prakāryyā* in the beginning of the first *pāda*, and restores the fourth *pāda* as *Kumāra-svāmināmikā*. It is therefore apparent that the filling up of the lacunae is entirely a matter of editor's choice.

Recently Raghavendra Vajapeyi has examined this verse,[3] in detail and has observed, "the statement *kartavyā pratimā kāchit pratimāṃ tasyā Śārṅgiṇaḥ* (1.17 later half) intended the meaning 'some image was desired to be carved out which appear as the replica of (the personality) of that Śārṅgin (?)'. Had it not been the intended meaning it would have been absurd to say that some image of Viṣṇu-Śārṅgin was to be carved out which could appear a replica of his image. Otherwise what was the need of making a second mention of the image of Viṣṇu with far greater reverence as *Bhagavato mūrtti* in line 19. We may venture to suggest that *tasya* (his) of 1.17 was intended to qualify '*yasya*' (whose) of line 15. That is the Śārṅgin under reference was Skandagupta and not Viṣṇu. Obviously the author of the Bhitari inscription was saying that the image of Viṣṇu was intended to closely reflect the personality of Skandagupta who had fought a fierce battle with the Hūṇas, in which the 'twang of his bow' had created a lasting impact on the mind of the enemy. Raghavendra Vajpeyi is perfectly justified to observe that it would have been absurd to make such a statement; but the explanation offered by him is far from satisfactory. It is too wide off the mark. It is too much to believe that the genetive form Śārṅgiṇaḥ stands for Skandagupta as the wielder of the bow. No doubt it does mean 'an archer' or a bowman; but in this context where the topic is the installation of a statue of Viṣṇu—*Bhaagavato mūrttiḥ*—as the author of the inscription puts it, we have to take Śāraṅgin as the name of Viṣṇu.

The awkwardness of the verse has been very beautifully removed by B. Ch. Chhabra[4] who proposed the reading, *na yasya pratimā kācit pratimā tasya Śārṅgiṇaḥ* 'The image of the Śārṅgin who has no visible form'. Chhabra has very lucidly explained his new reading, which he says came to his mind from the often repeated line of the White Yajurveda, *viz. na tasya pratimā asti yasya nāma mahadyaśaḥ.* Chhabra further remarked that since there is no vowel *u* attached to the *s* in the beginning of the third *pāda*, we may read simply *sa pratītaḥ*, meaning 'he who was delighted' or 'who was celebrated.'[5] The whole verse may therefore be read as :

[Na yasya pratimā] kācit pratimāṃtasya Śārṅgiṇaḥ*
sa pratītaścakāremāṁ [Kumārasvāmī nāmikām]

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It may be translated as follows :

> The celebrated one (or who was happy at his victory) made this image of the god Viṣṇu, the wielder of the bow, who has no form whatsoever.[6]

We may therefore conclude that there seems to be no ground for the inference drawn by Vajpeyi that Skandagupta caused the statue of Viṣṇu to be made which was the replica of his own self.

In the same paper, Vajpeyi has made two more suggestions which we propose to examine. Firstly he says, "It is well known fact that Kumāragupta I was a devotee of Kārttikeya and not of Viṣṇu."[7] This emphatic remark is contradicted by the epigraphic evidence at our disposal. Kumāragupta has been described as a *paramabhāgavata* in the Bhitari Stone Pillar inscription of Skandagupta.[8] The numismatic evidence too points to the same fact. On his silver coins, the legend is mostly *Paramabhāgavata Kumāragupta,* and on the Lion Slayer type of his gold coins he has been compared with Narasimha, the man lion incarnation of Viṣṇu. The legend on these coins runs as follows : *Sākśādiva narasiṁho siṁhamahendro jayatyaniśaṁ*. Even on the peacock type of coins on which Vajpeyi has placed so much reliance, Kumāragupta is not described as a devotee of Kārttikeya. The legend on these coins is : *Jayati svaguṇairguṇarāśī* on the obverse and *Mahendrakumāraḥ* on the reverse. A somewhat similar legend appears on one variety of his archer type of gold coins—*Guneśo mahitalam jayati kumāraḥ*.[9]

Therefore there is no evidence numismatic or epigraphical for postulating that Kumāragupta's tutelary deity was Kārttikeya. As pointed out both by A.S. Altekar and R.C. Majumdar, the peacock type of coinage was obviously intended to be a numismatic homage to the deity *after whom he was named*.[10]

Let us now take up the third question raised by Vajpeyi, namely "Did Skandagupta instal the image of Viṣṇu in some pre-existing temple or did he construct a new temple for the purpose." His emphatic answer is that "there is no indication that anything of the like nature (*i.e.* religious activity) could be said in the case of Kumāragupta I or that of any of his predecessors". He even dismisses the evidence of the bricks inscribed with the name of Kumāragupta and discovered near the pillar by Cunningham and recently by K.K. Sinha, by saying that in the absence of definite information regarding the stratum at which these bricks were found, they cannot be definitely assigned to the time of Kumāragupta I, and for aught we know they may belong to the time of Kumāragupta III whose silver-copper seal has been discovered at Bhitari and points to his active interest in the religious activity. True, the bricks are no sure indication of the existence of a temple built by Kumāragupta I; but does the Bhitari inscription which was put up during the rule of Skandagupta, say something about the construction of this important temple. Curiously enough, it does not. For though, verse 9 has been lost, the concluding verses 10, 11 and 12 only refer to the statue of Viṣṇu Śārṅgin, grant of a village by Skandagupta for the religious merit of his father and the setting up of the stone pillar. There is no mention at all of the construction of the temple by Skandagupta. On the other hand if we take the lone surviving word *kīrtti* in the beginning of line 17, in the sense of 'the monument of his father' it may constitute positive evidence of the existence at Bhitari of a temple built by Kumāragupta I. That *kīrtti* in the inscriptions is used in the sense of a religious monument has been conclusively demonstrated by B. Ch. Chhabra in one of his research papers.[11]

Notes and References

1. *CII*, III (1888 ed.), 54 and 56.
2. *CII*, III (1981 ed.), 315 and 317.
3. *PIHC*, 1983, 70ff.
4. *JIH*, XLI (1963), 546ff.
5. Chhabra has quoted Amarakośa, III. 82 a in support of these meanings : *khyāte hṛṣaṭe pratītaḥ*. Amarakośa, III, 9 gives it only the meaning *Prasiddha*, famous, celebrated.

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6. In the Viṣṇusahasranāma, Viṣṇu has been called *Amūrtimān* in verse 90 and *Amūrti* in verse 102.
7. *PIHC*, 1983, 72. This view is repeated at page 76 also.
8. *CII*, III (1981 ed.), 315 ff 5-6.
9. Allan, *CCGD*, 55.
10. Altekar, A.S., Catalogue of the Bayana Hoard, *CI* and Majumdar, R.C., CA, 23.
11. See *Siddh Kaumudi*, ed. Vishva Bandhu, 38ff.

15

AN INTERESTING TYPE OF SKANDAGUPTA'S COINS*

Amongst the gold coins of the old standard weight of 132 grains of Skandagupta there is a well known type on the obverse of which is the portrait of the King standing in a reclining posture and facing a female figure of youthful appearance holding a lotus in her hand. On the reverse is the figure of the goddess Lakṣmī seated on a lotus. V.A. Smith identified the female figure on the obverse as that of Skandagupta's queen and named this variety as 'King and Queen' type.[1] Allan did not agree with Smith's view. In his opinion the female figure on the obverse is not Skandagupta's queen, but is the goddess Lakṣmī.[2] The main considerations on which Allan based his views are the following.

Firstly she holds a lotus in her hand. Therefore "we need have no hesitation in identifying the lady as the goddess Lakṣmī, as her attributes show". Secondly Allan saw no reason why the queen of Skandagupta should figure on the coins. He further contended that the present type was struck to honour the goddess Lakṣmī to whose intervention was due in a large measure, the restoration of the fallen fortunes of the Gupta Dynasty. Allan compares the present female figure with that of Lakṣmī on the Chatra type of Candragupta II's coins.[3]

Let us examine these arguments. No doubt the lotus flower is an attribute of Lakṣmī, but it is by no means exclusively associated with her. Both literary and archaeological evidence show that it was a favourite even with mortal maidens, in ancient India. The *līlākamala* (sport lotus) is frequently mentioned in Sanskrit literature.

JNSI, VIII.

The following are a few examples.

एवं वादिनि देवर्षौ पार्श्वे पितुरधोमुखी । लीलाकमलपत्त्राणि गणयामास पार्वती ।।

Kumārasambhava, VI. 84.

हस्ते लीलाकमलमलके बालकुन्दानुविद्धं नीता लोध्रप्रसवरजसा पाण्डुतामानने श्रीः ।
चूडापाशे नवकुरबकं चारु कर्णे शिरीषं सीमन्ते च त्वदुपगमजं यत्र नीपं वधूनाम् ।।

Meghadūta, II. 2.

कदा नौ संगमो भावीत्याकीर्णे वक्तुमक्षमम् । अवेत्य कान्तमबला लीलापद्मं न्यमीलयत् ।

Kāvyādarśa, II, 261.

In some of the Ajanta paintings we find ladies holding a lotus with a long stalk. Therefore the mere presence of the lotus cannot prove that the female figure on the obverse of the coin is Lakṣmī. On the other hand the absence of the 'halo' round the face, which is almost invariably found in the case of divine forms, indicates that she is a mortal. This argument has particular force when we remember that on this very type, the goddess Lakṣmī on the reverse has got the halo. The figure of Lakṣmī on coin No. 7 in Plate VIII with which Allan compares the present figure, has a 'halo' round the face and so the comparison is inapt and cannot support Allan's contention. Further, the coin has on the reverse the figure of Lakṣmī. We cannot expect this monotonous repetition from the Gupta artist. If the female figure on the obverse had been of the goddess Lakṣmī, the artist would have changed the design on the reverse. On a close examination of the King's portrait we find that he has been depicted in the pose of rapt attention. He is looking towards the female figure like an enchanted lover. The lady must therefore, be his favourite queen. Her raised forefinger suggests that she is arguing a point or perhaps remonstrating with the king, who out of intense love is listening to the arguments and stands, as if charmed (*mugdha*) like a snake. The bewitching influence of the Queen's presence more than her arguments is responsible for the amatory expression on the king's face. The king's attitude is not devotional not even reverential, as it should have been towards a goddess 'to whose intervention Skandagupta attributed the restoration of the family fortune'. I do not agree with Altekar's view given below that the Goddess is offering something to the king; in that case his hand would have been in the *añjali* pose.

Of course Sanskrit poets often speak of Lakṣmī as a royal consort, but a representation of the idea was probably never tolerated. We have a significant remark from Kālidāsa :

छायामण्डललक्ष्येण तमदृश्या किल स्वयम् । पद्मा पद्मातपत्रेण भेजे साम्राज्यदीक्षितम् ॥

We find here that Lakṣmī while supposed to be attending upon the King is kept invisible. Her presence is to be inferred from the halo.

Hence I conclude that for the various reasons given above the female figure on the obverse is not of Lakṣmī but that of Skandagupta's queen and Smith was right in designating the type as 'King and Queen Type'. The motif was quite familiar to the Gupta mint masters, from the Candragupta Kumāradevī type. Skandagupta too must have desired to perpetuate the memory of a beloved queen whose relations had probably rendered valuable services in the wars against the Hūṇas and Puṣyamitras. Unfortunately we have no evidence on the point, as Skandagupta did not leave a son in whose records we could get a reference to the powerful family of his mother.

Notes and References

1. *Indian Museum Catalogue*, 117.
2. *CCGD*, XCIX.
3. *ibid.*, Pl. VIII, 7.

16

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE BIHAR STONE PILLAR INSCRIPTION*

The Bihar Stone Pillar Inscription was edited and published by J.F. Fleet in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, III, 47-52 together with a Plate No. VIIB. In a fresh study R.C. Majumdar suggested some very plausible emendations of the text, and deduced some conclusions of historical importance, resulting therefrom.[1] As is well-known, the pillar bears not one, but two inscriptions which were originally separated by a double horizontal line drawn across the face of the pillar. The suggestions of Majumdar have been recently criticised by Kartikeya Sarma of Nagpur.[2]

Majumdar proposed to read Candraguptabaṭe or Indraguptabaṭe instead of Skandaguptabaṭe. On this Sarma has remarked, "Fleet's reading seems to be quite correct and there is no ground to modify the word (he means syllable) *nda* into *ndra* before *guptabaṭe*". But in reality there is a very valid ground for the emendation proposed by Majumdar, for, attached to the lower end of the syllable *nda* there is a clear mark for subscript *r*, standing to the left. The syllable is therefore *ndra* as read by Majumdar and not *nda* as Sarma wants to read it.

Again in line 23, what Fleet had read as *ndagupta* and had restored into Skandagupta, Majumdar proposed to read as *rugupta* and restored the name as Purugupta. Here again Sarma remarks, "We see no justification to correct the original reading of Fleet." A reference to the published facsimile[3] shows that the clearly legible first

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**JOI*, XX (1970).

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syllable can be read as *ru*. What more justification is needed for the reading Purugupta as suggested by Majumdar?

Further, Sarma remarks, "Again the shortness of the missing line 24 suggests that the mother's name of the king was not mentioned at this place also"[4] It is not clear what Sarma intends to convey by the words 'missing line'. Line 24 is very much there, and it is not shorter than other lines of the epigraph by any means. Of course the first few letters are illegible; but the space occupied by it is by no means shorter. It contains in the legible portion the word *paramabhāgavato*. Four or five letters in the beginning are illegible. Thus the total number of syllables in line 24 is 10 or 11, which is the usual number in each line of this second part of the record. Therefore, the inference that the name of the king's mother has been omitted here is unwarranted. On the contrary line 23 is shorter, and the only legible syllables in it are *ruguptaḥ* which may legitimately be restored as Puruguptaḥ.

He is a successor of Purugupta, and not to that of Skandagupta, to whom the epithet *paramabhāgavato* mentioned in line 24 is to be applied.

Inter-alia Sarma has suggested that the emperor Kumāragupta mentioned in the Mandasor inscription of the Guild of silkweavers bearing dates 493 and 529 in the Mālava-era, should be identified with Kumāragupta II, for whom the Sarnath image inscription supplies the date 154 G.E.=A.D. 473. The suggestion is not new. In 1918 Mr. Pannalal had made this suggestion.[5] He had argued that lines 14 to 20 of the Mandasor inscription form "a single long parenthesis describing the origin of the temple and leading to the main statement about its repairs in M.S. 529." A similar view was expressed by D.B. Diskalkar[6] that the stand taken by these scholars is incorrect, will be at once clear from an examination of the relevant portion of the Mandasor inscription. In verse 22 (line 12 of the inscription) we are told that, "having considered that this world, the span of human life and the heaps of wealth are more unstable than the beautiful ear-ornament of Vidyādhara lady consisting of a sprout being waived by the wind, they made a firm and auspicious resolve, and then."[7] Now the last words *tatas=tu* of this verse, raise an expectation in our mind as to what came out of the resolve of the Guild. Instead of giving an answer immediately, the poet first introduces the name of the ruling emperor Kumāragupta, and then begins an account of the local dynasty which ends in verse 28 (line 16). Then the poet gives us the answer to the question raised by the words *tatas=tu* in verse 29. He says, "When the very same excellent king, the liberal Bandhu-Varmā of high shoulders, was protecting this fully prosperous Daśapura, the Silk-weavers who had constituted themselves into a guild caused to be built this lofty and matchless temple of the Sun, by means of the masses of riches obtained by them".[8] Verse 30 gives a description of the temple and verses 31 to 33 describe the winter season during which it was constructed. Finally verses 34 and 35 give us the details of the date of the founding of the temple in the following words :

> *mālavānāṃ gaṇasthityā yāte śata-catuṣṭyae |*
> *trinavatyadhike 'bdānām 'ri (ṛ) tau sevya-ghana-stane ||*
> *sahasya-māsa-śuklasya praśastc 'hni trayodaśe |*
> *maṅgalācāra-vidhinā prāsādo 'yaṃ niveśitaḥ ||*

"When four centuries of years increased by ninetythree had passed since the establishment of the Mālava Republic, in the season when plump breasts are to be enjoyed, in the month of *Pauṣa*, on the auspicious thirteenth day of the bright (fortnight), this temple was erected with the performance of auspicious rites." With this verse, the narration comes to a logical end so the date 493 has to be connected with the king mentioned in verse 23 and it is obvious that Kumāragupta who was ruling in 493 is Kumāragupta I. We have been told in proper sequence that thinking of the transitoriness of this world, the span of humam life and the worldly riches, the Guild of Silk-weavers took a firm decision, and when Kumāragupta was the ruler of the whole earth, and when Bandhuvarmā was the ruler of Daśapura, this temple of the Sun was founded with auspicious rites in the Mālava Year 493. Having completed his account of the building of the temple, the poet goes on to inform us that after the *lapse of much time*, and during the rule of other kings, a part of the temple became damaged and has now been repaired by the Guild, for the increase of its own fame.[9] The use of the word *adhunā*-(now) in verse 36 is very significant. It pointedly refers to the date 529, which is given in verse 39 below.

The verse 36 unmistakably separates the two events—(i) the building of the temple, described in verses 23 to 35, and its repair described in verse 37.[10] Therefore, the date 529 M.S. given in verse 39,[11] cannot be connected with the king mentioned in verse 23, and we have to remain in the dark, regarding the name of the king who was ruling in 529 M.S. It must also be stated that we cannot always insist on finding the names of the ruling monarch in every record. In the Mandasor Stone Slab inscription dated M.S. 524, there is no mention of the reigning sovereign. The emperor Candragupta figures as the father of Govindagupta, whose *senāpati* Vāyurakṣita was the father of Dattabhaṭa, the donor. Again, even king Prabhākara has been mentioned not as reigning in the year 524, but as the person who had appointed Dattabhaṭa to the post of the commander of the armies.

Notes and References

1. *IC*, X, 170-73.
2. *JOI*, XVII, 267ff.
3. *CII*, III, Plate VIB, facing p. 46.
4. *JOI*, XVII, 269, para 3.
5. Hindustan Review, 1918.
6. *J. Bo.Br. RAS*, N.S. II (1926), 176-78.
7. विद्याधरीरुचिरपल्लवकर्णपूर-
   वातेरितास्थिरतरं प्रविचिन्त्य लोकं ।
   मानुष्यमर्त्थंनिचयांश्च तथा विशालां
   स्तेषां शुभा मतिरमूदचला ततस्तु ।।
8. तस्मिन्नेव क्षितिपतिवृषे बन्धुवर्म्मण्युदारे
   सम्यक् स्फीतं दशपुराम (मि) दं पालयत्युन्नतांसे ।
   शिल्पावाप्तैर्धनसमुदयैः पट्टवायैरुदारं
   श्रेणीभूतैर्भवनमतुलं कारितं दीप्तरश्मेः ।।

9. बहुना समतीतेन कालेनान्यैश्च पार्त्थिवैः ।
व्यशीर्य्यतैकदेशोऽस्य भवनस्य ततोऽधुना ॥36॥
10. स्वयशो व्रि (वृ) द्धये सर्व्वमत्युदारमुदारया ।
संस्कारितमिदं भूयः भक्त्या भानुमतो गृहम् ॥37॥
11. वत्सरशतेषु पंचसु विशत्यधिकेषु नवसु चाब्देषु ।
यातेष्वभिरम्यतपस्यमास-शुक्लद्वितीयायां (याम्) ॥39॥

17

A PASSAGE IN THE SARNATH INSCRIPTIONS OF KUMĀRAGUPTA AND BUDHAGUPTA*

In the paper entitled 'New light on the Gupta era', published in the last volume of this *Journal*[1], Shri N.P. Joshi's rendering of the passages containing the dates in the Sarnath Inscription of Kumāragupta, dated 154 and Sarnath Inscription of Budhagupta dated 157 is entirely incorrect. Regarding these passages, Shri Joshi says, "The expressions *Guptānām. . . uttare* and *Guptānām samatikrānte* would mean literally 'after the Gupta (?) had passed away' or 'when the Gupta dynasty ended'. Such expressions in the inscriptions of the Gupta Kings do not by themselves stand to sense."[2]

In arriving at these conclusions, Shri Joshi has entirely missed the real and correct import of these sentences, and he has over-shot the mark when he says that these expressions do not stand to sense. It is a well-known fact that in ancient India, dates were recorded both in current as well as expired years, the latter being, as remarked by R.G. Bhandarkar, the more common way. The relevant portion of the text of the Sarnath Inscription of Kumāragupta runs as follows :

वर्षशते गुप्तानां सचतुः पञ्चाशदुत्तरे ।
भूमिं रक्षति कुमारगुप्ते मासि ज्येष्ठे द्वितीयायाम् ॥

This verse may be translated as follows: "In the year one hundred together with four and exceeded by fifty of the Guptas, when Kumāragupta is protecting the earth, in the month of Jyeṣṭha, on the second lunar day." The word *catuḥpañcāśaduttare* goes with *varṣaśate*, and the two together express the figure 154, just as *ekottaraśatam* means

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**VIJ*, XV, (1977).

101. There is thus not the remotest suggestion of 'the passing away' of the Gupta dynasty.

The text of the Sarnath Inscription of Budhagupta runs as follows:

गुप्तानां समतिक्रान्ते सप्तपंचाशदुत्तरे ।
शत्ते समानां पृथिवीं बुधगुप्ते प्रशासति ।।

Here *samatikrānte* qualifies *śate* and means 'expired'; and *uttare* has the same meaning of 'exceeded by' or 'increased by', as in the preceding inscription of Kumāragupta. The verse can be translated thus: "When a century of years increased by seven and fifty, of the Guptas, has passed (and) when Budhagupta is ruling over the earth." Thus the word *samatikrānte* refers to the passing of one hundred and fiftyseven years and not to that of the Gupta dynasty. Both the emperors Kumāragupta and Budhagupta are expressly described as ruling and protecting the earth on the respective dates when these inscriptions were put up.

Notes and References

1. *VIJ*, XIV (1976), 245-60.
2. *ibid.*, 256.

18

NAGAṆĀ IN THE MANDASOR INSCRIPTION OF THE MĀLAVA YEAR 529*

In the Mandasor inscription composed by Vatsabhaṭṭi, the word *Nagaṇā* occurs in the 18th and 22nd lines which I quote below for the convenience of the readers:

L. 18 : *Kāle Tuṣāra-kaṇa-karkkaṣa-śīta-vāta-vega-pranṛtta-lavalī-Nagaṇaikaśākhe.*
L. 22 : *Madhu - pāna-mudita-madhukarā-kul-opagīta-nagaṇaika-pṛthu-śākhe.*

J.F. Fleet has given *Cardiospermum Halicacabum* as the Latin equivalent of *Nagaṇā*. This meaning has been challenged by K.M. Shembavnekar, who, writing in the Journal of Indian History, X, has remarked, "Vatsabhaṭṭi has twice used the word *Nagaṇā* to the great confusion of the decipherers of epigraphs. Fleet and others have taken it as the name of a tree though such a tree is never mentioned in any of the *Kośas*. Thus a veritable pseudonym has been brought into existence without the knowledge that it is so". In his opinion *Nagaṇā* simply means 'countless'.

Of course the euphonic combination *Nagaṇaika* can be split up both as *Nagaṇa+eka* and *Nagaṇā+eka*; but it is the sense that will determine the choice. According to Shembavnekar it is *Nagaṇa+eka*, for the *Nagaṇā* does not exist. It is not known even to lexicographers. However, in making such a positive assertion he is quite mistaken.

The word *Nagaṇā* is given in H.H. Wilson's Sanskrit-English Dictionary and explained as a name of a plant called 'Heart-pea' in

JIH, XVIII.

English and Cardiospermum Halicacabum in Latin. For this meaning Wilson has not drawn upon his imagination; but he quotes an ancient Lexicon named Ratnamālā which gives the following synonyms for *Nagaṇā*:

1. Pārāvatipadi,
2. Piṇyā,
3. Spuṭalandhanī,
4. Jyotiṣmati,
5. Pūtitailā and
6. Īngudī.

In the Sanskrit Worterbusch of Bothling and Roth, the word *Nagaṇā* is explained as the name of a plant; and the same authority has been quoted. Wilson's dictionary was published in 1819 and the Worterbusch in 1861, long before the discovery of the Mandasor inscription. It is quite obvious therefore, that the modern compilers of lexicons have not depended on the epigraphists for this meaning of the word. The Śabdakalpadruma also gives the word *Nagaṇā* as the name of a plant.

Nagaṇā is a plant not only known to lexicographers but also to medical men in modern times. It is given in the Vaidyakaśabdasindhu compiled by Umeshchandradatta. Under its other name 'Jyotiṣmati' it is described in the 'Indian Medical Plants' by Kirtikar and Basu.

So *Nagaṇā* is neither a pseudonym, nor a word unknown to ancient writers. Fleet was sure of what he wrote, unlike his critic who was unnecessarily overconfident. Further the word *Nagaṇa* 'countless' will not give any sense in the present context. Here, *Nagaṇā* is followed by *eka* which also qualifies *Śākhā*. It is difficult to understand how the poet could speak of the branch as one and at the same time 'countless'. But in line 22, we have the expression *nagaṇ-aik-pṛthu-śākhe*. Here if we take *Nagaṇā* as 'countless', the English rendering will be, "on one big branch which is countless". This is obviously absurd. But if we take *Nagaṇā* as the name of a plant as Fleet has done, the sense is perfectly clear. We can render the compound as, 'on one big branch of Nagaṇā'. We can therefore safely conclude that *Nagaṇā* is the name of a plant mentioned in Sanskrit lexicons and Fleet was perfectly right in explaining it as *Cardiospermum Halicacabum.*

19

A STUDY OF SOME VERSES OF THE MANDASOR STONE INSCRIPTION DATED MALAVA YEAR 529*

This inscription of great historical importance was discovered by the copyists of J.F. Fleet, in 1884 and was first published by him in the *Indian Antiquary*, XV, in 1886. It was subsequently included by him in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, III, which was edited by him and published in 1888. Sir R.G. Bhandarkar, published some corrections in the text and translation which were published in the *J Bo. Br. R A S*, XVII (1887-89). F. Kielhorn published the correction of a reading in verse 31 of this inscription, which much improved the sense. Recently A.L. Basham has presented a fresh study of this epigraph, in his paper read at the Symposium on the Gupta Period of Indian history, conducted at Carlton College in Northfield Minnesota, in 1977. The papers presented at this symposium have now been printed under the title, "Essays on Gupta Culture."[1]

Commenting on verse 20 of this inscription Basham remarks

> "Vatsabhatti gracefully pays tribute to the traditional profession of his clients with an avocation of the *Abhisārikā*, the girl who goes out secretly at night to meet her lover, a stock character of classical Sanskrit poetry."[2]

In reality the verse has absolutely no reference to an *abhisārikā* heroine. Basham has been misled to put such an interpretation of this verse, by the faulty text of this verse as given in *C.I.I.*, III. Fleet has given the text as follows:

Tāruṇya-kānty-upacito=pi suvarṇṇa-hāra-
tāmbūla-puṣpa-vidhinā-samalaṅkṛto=pi /

**JRAS*, 1986.

nārī-janaḥ priyam-upaiti na tāvad=agryāṃ (*aśryāṃ*)
yāvan=na paṭṭamaya-vastra-yugāni dhatte ||[3]

Following Fleet, Basham has translated this verse thus:

> "Though she is endowed with youth and beauty, though she is adorned with golden necklaces and garlands of flowers, a woman will not go to meet her lover in secret until she has put on two silken garments."

Here it must be noted that the idea of going to meet in secret originates from the emended reading, *aśryāṃ*, not the original, *agryāṃ*. As a matter of fact the emendation is not at all required. It became necessary on account of the incorrect reading *priyam*. A careful examination of the first conjunct syllable in this word shows that the upper letter consists of a curve which is quite round at the top, Inside the curve is a horizontal bar. So that the letter is palatal *ś*, and the complete conjunct is *śri* and not *pri*. The third line therefore should be read as:

nārī-janaḥ śriyam=upaiti na tāvad-agryāṃ

It has to be translated as, "the women-folk do not attain foremost splendour, so long as..." The complete verse therefore, should be translated thus:

Though abundantly endowed with youth and glamour, (and) though fully adorned with golden necklaces, flowers and chewing of betel in the proper manner, the women-folk do not attain foremost splendour so long as it does not don a pair of garments made of silk.

Here we can clearly notice the anxiety of the poet who composed this verse to highlight the excellence of the silk cloth prepared by the guild of silk-weavers which had got the temple of the god Sun, erected at Daśapura. There is certainly no idea of the *Abhisārikā nāyikā* in this verse. It is intended to emphasize the excellent quality of the silk-cloth produced by the Mandasor-guild, and may be rightly regarded as a compliment to the skill of the weavers who were the patrons of the writer of this verse and who had carried out the construction of the temple. It can also serve as a very eloquent piece of advertisement for the silk-cloth produced by the guild.

2. Fleet's reading and translation of verse 31 was the following:

Rāmā-sanātha-bhavane dara-bhāskar=āṃśu
vahni pratāpa-subhage jala-līna-mīne /
candr=āṃśu-harmya-tala-candana tālavṛnta
hār=opabhoga-rahite hima-dagdha-padme //

"In that season, which unites men with (their) lovely mistresses; which is agreeable with the warmth of the fire of the rays of the Sun (shining) in the glens; in which the fishes lie low in the water; which (on account of the cold) is destitute of the enjoyment of the beams of the moon, and (sitting in the open air on) the flat roofs of houses, and sandal-wood perfume and palm-leaf-fans and necklaces, in which the water lilies are bitten by the frost."[4]

As pointed out by R.G. Bhandarkar,[5] both the text as well as the translation are faulty. Bhandarkar took notice only of the expression *Rāmā-sanātha-racane*; and remarked, "It being necessary to take it as a *Bahuvrīhi* it can only be dissolved as *Rāmābhiḥ sanāthā racanā yasmin i.e.* that in which a (certain) arrangement or system is accompanied by women". This means nothing. What arrangement can that be? What Fleet reads as *c* is clearly *v*. *r* is supplied by him as the letter is effaced in the original, but certainly we can as well supply *bh* and read the expression *rāmāsanātha bhavane i.e.* 'that (time) in which there are lovely women in the house'. But even Bhandarkar's correction takes us only half way. Fleet's translation of the whole line is faulty. He connects *dara-bhāskarāṃśu* with *Vahni-pratāpa* and renders his text, as 'agreeable with the warmth of the fire of the rays of the Sun (shining) in the glens'. Of course the word *dara* as a noun does mean 'a cave or a cavity' but what is the idea in speaking of the rays of the Sun shining in a glen, being pleasant? The rays are pleasant everywhere in winter. Even the meaning 'slight' assigned to *dara* by Basham[6] does not seem to be appropriate here. Moreover Basham too has connected *vahni-pratāpa* with *bhāskarāṃśu* and translated it as 'the fiery rays of the Sun'. How could the *slight* rays be fiery? *Slight* rays could neither be fiery, nor capable of making the winter pleasant. And further to speak of the 'fire of the rays of the Sun' looks almost ridiculous. In fact, here we have the *Dvandva* compound, where *bhāskar=āṃśu* is one member of the Dual compound and *vahni-pratāpa* is the second. Here the poet is speaking of three things which make even the dreary winter look agreeable. The first of these remained unrecognized, until Kielhorn removed the veil from this mystery. In his article, *Die Mandasor Inschrift vom Mālava Jahre 529 (=472 n. chr.) und Kālidāsa's Ritusaṁhāra*",[7] he discussed both Fleet's reading and Bhandarkar's note on that and concluded that the correct reading of the first line of this verse is as follows:

> *Rāmā-sanatha-bhavan=odara-bhāskar=āṁśu* and rightly took, as pointed out by us above, that *vahni-pratāpa* is a member of the *dvandva* compound with the three members:

1. *Rāmā sanātha-bhavanodara*,
2. *Bhāskarāṁśu* and
3. *Vahni-pratāpa*.

The verse should therefore be translated as:

"In that season, which becomes pleasant with the interior of the mansion with lovely ladies inside, the rays of the Sun, and the glow of the fire; and in which the fish lie down under water, in which the enjoyment of the rays of the moon, of the terrace of mansions, sandal-(paste), of fans, of garlands is discarded; and when the frost blights the lotus flower."

3. Verse 34 too of this inscription has not been properly understood. Fleet's text of this verse runs thus:

Mālavānāṃ gaṇa-sthityā yāte śata-catuṣṭaye |
trinavaty=abdanāṃ ṛtau sevya-ghana-svane ||[8]

It has been translated by him as follows:

"When (by the reckoning from) the tribal constitution of the Malavas, four centuries of years, increased by ninety-three, had elapsed; in that season when the low thunder of the muttering clouds is to be welcomed (as indicating the approach of warmth again)".[9]

Following Fleet's reading *ghana-svane*, Basham also has rendered the second half of line 4 as follows: "When (men) look forward to the thunder of the clouds".[10] None of the two great scholars, gave a minute's thought to the incongruity involved in this rendering. The poet is describing the winter season, in this line as well as in the previous three verses. He has even mentioned that lotus flowers became blighted by the frost and cold winds wafting particles of frost blow. In the severity of so much cold, the clouds should be certainly most unwelcome, and men can hardly be expected to welcome their advent. This incongruity is at once removed, by one correction in line 4. What was read by Fleet as *svane* is really *stane*.[11] This line is to be translated as:

> "in the season in which plump breasts (of young women) are to be enjoyed."

4. Commenting on verse 36, Basham remarks:

> "It is strange that a temple built of solid blocks of masonary without arches and domes should have needed extensive repairs after such a brief period, and we expect that the troubled times around A.D. 454 when the Hūṇas made their first great attack on India, may have had something to do with the damage".[12]

Strange as it may seem that a part of the temple got damaged within a span of 36 years, we cannot attribute the damage to the invasion of the Hūṇas. The contemporary epigraphic evidence which is far more reliable than either tradition or foreigners' accounts based on heresay, clearly goes against such an inference. The Eran Stone Boar inscription records the building of a temple of Viṣṇu in the Boar incarnation, by one Dhanyaviṣṇu, during the very first year of the reign of Toramāṇa, the first Hūṇa king to establish his rule over a part of central India. In the fifteenth regnal year of his son Mihirakula, a temple of the god Sun was constructed on the hill-top at Gwalior. In the face of such a definite and clear evidence of the Hūṇa invader's attitude towards the Hindu religious monuments, we cannot think that any damage was done to the Sun temple at Daśapura by any of these two rulers. Moreover it is doubtful whether the Hūṇas ever reached Mandasor (Daśapura). In the Mandasor Stone Slab inscription dated M.S. 589, we get the specific statement, that there were some predecessors of Yaśodharman, who founded his lineage, and who are called 'kings'. In line 8 of this inscription we get the significant statement:[13]

> "*Tasya prabho=rvanśa-kṛtām nṛpāṇām*
> *pād=āśrayād=viśruta-puṇya-kiritiḥ* |
> *bhṛtyaḥ sva-naibhṛtya jit=āri-ṣṭka*
> *āsīd=vasīyān=kila Ṣaṣṭhidattaḥ* ||"

"The servant of the kings who founded the family of the lord, was Ṣaṣṭhidatta—the fame of whose religious merit, was known far and wide through the protection of (their) feet; who by his resoluteness conquered the six enemies (of religion) (and) who was indeed very excellent."

The inscription then gives names of Ṣaṣṭhidatta's descendants upto five generations, the last of whom Nirdoṣa was serving the ruler of Daśapura in M.S. 589=A.D. 532. Allowing an average of fifteen years for each generation we get 60 years. This means that Saṣṭhidatta flourished atleast 60 years before A.D. 532, or in *c.* A.D. 472. There can therefore be no question of the Hūṇas damaging the Sun temple. This is now definitely confirmed by the recently discovered Risthal Stone Slab inscription[14] of Prakāśadharma, a scion of the Aulikara dynasty, and in all likelihood the father of Yaśodharman. This inscription dated in M.S. 572 (A.D. 515) informs us that Prakāśadharma deprived the Hūṇa ruler of his imperial title and took away the ladies of his harem as captives and presented them to the god Śiva.[15] It is thus quite apparent that the Hūṇas were not in a position to attack Mandasor and damage the Sun temple. The damage to a part of the temple could have been caused by lightning or excessive rainfall. In the climatic condition of India, both of the phenomena are possible.

5. The first line of the verse 16 was read by Fleet[16] as follows: *Śravaṇa- [su] bhaga [ṁ] dh [ā] nurvvaidya [ṁ] dṛḍhaṃ pariniṣthitāḥ*, and translated thus:

> "Some of them became excessively well-acquainted with the science of archery (in which the twanging of the bow is) pleasing to the ear."

Basham has also translated the line, more or less similarly. His rendering is, "Some became past masters in archery, pleasant to the ear (from the twang of the bow string)."[17] As Basham has followed Fleet's reading his translation is also faulty like that of Fleet. Firstly it may be pointed out that since *pariniṣṭhita* means 'skilled in', we require a locative in *śravaṇasubhaga*, whereas with Fleet's reading we get a nominative or accusative in case the noun it qualifies is masculine. Moreover one may ask with Sir R.G. Bhandarkar, as how can archery be pleasing to the ear? Bhandarkar further remarked, "the emendations made by Fleet have introduced an accusative which is not governed by anything and is therefore ungrammatical". He proposed to read this part as *śravaṇa-subhage gāndharve=nye pariniṣṭhitāḥ,*[18] meaning, 'others were skilled in the art of music which is pleasing to the ear'.

6. In the opening portion of the first line of verse 18, Fleet read *prājña manojña-vadhavaḥ*. Both Fleet and Basham have rendered it as 'having charming wives'. R.G. Bhandarkar remarked, "*manojña-vadhavaḥ* is quite ungrammatical. As a *Bahuvrīhi* adjective qualifying *anye*, it ought to be *manojñā-vadhūkā*, by Pāṇini, V, 4, 153. It may be *manojña-vapuṣaḥ*, having charming bodies."[19] We have verified the reading from the original stone in the Gujri Mahal Museum, Gwalior. The reading is definitely *manojña-vapuṣaḥ*. Moreover, to say 'having charming wives' is a very awkward and unusual compliment.

Notes and References

1. Published by M/s. Moti Lal Banarsi Das, Delhi, 1983.
2. Essays on Gupta Culture, 99.
3. *CII*, III, 82. We had pointed out the correction of *priyam* into *sriyam*, in our Epigraphic Notes published in the Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, IV Session, Lahore (1940).
4. *CII*, III, 83, 86-87.
5. *J Bo Br R A S*, XVII (1887-89), 80ff.

6. *op. cit.*, 102.
7. *Gottinger Nachr*, 1890, 251-253.
8. *CII*, III, 83, line 19.
9. *ibid.*, 87.
10. *op. cit.*, 103.
11. *cf.* Sircar, D.C., *Select Inscriptions*, I, 295.
12. *op. cit.*, 103-04.
13. *CII*, III, 153, line 8, *ibid.*, 156.
14. Mirashi, V.V., *Studies in Ancient Indian History*, Bombay, 1984, 27ff.
15. *Risthal Inscription*, verses 16 & 18.
16. *CII*, III, 82 & 85 respectively.
17. *op. cit.*, 97.
18. *J Bo Br RAS*, XVII (1887-89), 80ff.
19. *ibid.*

20

NALANDA CLAY SEALING OF MAHĀRĀJĀDHIRĀJA VAINYA-GUPTA*

A triangular fragment of a clay-sealing measuring 1½″×1½″×2⅛″ was discovered from the site of monastery No. 1, at Nalanda, during the excavations of the years 1927-28. It bears register No. SI 687 and is preserved in the Archaeological Museum at Nalanda. I had examined the fragmentary sealing, with the kind permission of the Director General of Archaeology in December, 1934 and had taken a reading of as much of the text as was preserved. The letters in the preserved portion were free from any ambiguity, and came out clearly in the tracings taken on Tissue paper, and supplied to me by the then Superintendent of the Eastern Circle.[1] On the basis of the original sealing and the paper impressions, I had read the emperor's name as Vainya-Gupta. Hiranand Shastri, who published the sealing in his excellent work *Nalanda and its Epigraphic Materials*, Delhi, 1942, also read the emperor's name as Vainya-Gupta. This reading has been recently challenged by Nisar Ahmad, vide his paper, published in the *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, XXIX, 44-45.

According to Ahmad, the first part of the emperor's name is Candra and not Vainya. It is a well-known fact that in the script of the Gupta age, *C* and *V* are sometimes very much alike, and it can be conceded for the sake of argument that the first letter may be *C*. But it is impossible to agree with Ahmad's view that, "what the editor of the seal has taken to be the medial vowel *ai* over this letter, is non-existent."[2] Before making such a positive statement, it would have been better for Ahmad to examine the sealing or an impression of the same. As stated above, the letters on the original sealing are very clear and leave no room for any doubt. Of the two strokes needed for medial *ai* one is unmistakably visible on the accompanying impression, and there are traces of the second stroke also, so that this syllable has to be read as *Vai* and not simply *V* or *C*. What is even more pertinent to the issue is the second syllable, which Ahmad proposes to be read as *ndra*. This syllable too is very clear on the sealing as well as the impression. There is absolutely no trace of the horizontal stroke for the subscript *r* below this syllable. The bottom of the letter is absolutely free from any appendages. In this conjunct, the upper letter is *n* and the lower is subscript *y*. This syllable therefore is *nya* and not *ndra*.

**JNSI*, XXX (1968).

The second member of the conjunct may by a stretch of imagination be read as *d* but similar formations in this very fragment show that the subscript *y* is formed exactly as it has been formed in this conjunct. We have to conclude therefore, that this syllable is *nya* and not *ndra*; and thus the name of the Gupta emperor is Vainya and not Chandra.[3]

A reference to the plate will make two points very clear: Firstly the presence of the medial vowel *ai* over *v* is quite clear. Secondly the second conjunct consists of two letters only, and these are *n* and *ya*. There is no trace whatever of the subscript *r*.

Notes and References

1. Unfortunately those excellent estampages so kindly supplied to me by Shri A. Ghosh were lost during the 1947 disturbances, at Lahore.
2. *JNSI*, XXIX, 44.
3. A similar mistake was made by Mr. Allan while deciphering the name on the archer type coins of Vainya-Gupta Dvādaśāditya. Allan missed the medial *ai* strokes over the first letter and took it to be *ca*, and as a natural corollary, the second letter was taken by him to be *ndra*, although just as in the case of the present sealing, there was absolutely no trace of the subscript *r*. (*BMC*, *GD*, 144, Plate, XXIII, No. 8). The correct reading was recognised for the first time by D.C. Ganguli, (*IHQ*, IX, 784ff.).

21

IS THE BHAMODRA MOHOTTA COPPER-PLATE OF DROṆASIṄHA SPURIOUS?*

Kielhorn and Sten Konow have expressed the opinion that the B.M. Plate of the Maitraka ruler Mahārāja Droṇasiṅha is spurious.[1] They have not given any reasons for this view. It may, however, be presumed that their opinion is based on the difference in form and style of the present inscription and the other known Maitraka grants. For example, the usual opening sentence[2] is missing in this copper-plate. No genealogy has been given. But these grounds are not sufficient for doubting the authenticity of the document. It is really too much to expect strict uniformity in the form of the draft of the charters of a dynasty particularly when they do not relate to the same period. Instances of such differences occur in the records of other ruling houses. For example, the Dhanaidah, Damodarpur and Gunaighar grants simply mention the name of the ruling sovereign, and do not give any genealogy. The Baigram copper-plate of the Gupta year 128 does not even mention the name of the ruling sovereign, and is issued by a Kumārāmātya who is described as परमभट्टारकपादानुध्यात । Yet the discovery of the Bhitari Silver Seal clearly indicates that there must have been certain records in which the complete genealogy was given. The Gupta feudatories, the kings of the family of Parivrājaka, give in their grants a complete genealogy. It is thus clear that the form of the draft varied from time to time and locality to locality. The B.M. Copper-Plate is the earliest known charter of the Maitraka family. We have no other inscription of Mahārāja Droṇasiṅha or any of his predecessors, where the usual phraseology

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*Bharatiya Vidya, XVI.

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of later Maitraka grants occurs. It is highly likely that the set phraseology of the genealogical portion met with in the later Maitraka grants, is posterior to the reign of Droṇasiṅha.

Moreover, the inscription presents certain features which make it clear that the charter is a genuine one. Firstly, the later grants inform us that Droṇasiṅha was a feudatory ruler owing allegiance to an imperial overlord.[3] In the present inscription also he is described as a feudatory of a sovereign, and has been given the sub-ordinate title of Mahārāja. Secondly, some of the names of administrative officers which are met with only in the Maitraka grants, *e.g.*, Drāṅgika, Dhruvādhikarṇika, are also found in the present record. Lastly, the characters of the record definitely belong to this very age and do not betray any sign of a later age, as the Spurious Nalanda and Gaya Copper-Plates of Samudragupta do. We may, therefore, conclude that the Bhamodra Mohotta Copper-Plate of Droṇasiṅha is a genuine charter.

Notes and References

1. *Epigraphia Indica*, VIII, Appendix I, p. 2, fn. 2., and *ibid.*, XI, p. 106; fn. 1.
2. प्रसभप्रणतामित्राणां मैत्रकाणामतुलबलसपत्नमण्डलाभोगसंसक्तसंप्रहारशतलब्धप्रताप: प्रतापोपनतदानमानार्ज्जवोपार्ज्जितानुरागानुरक्तमौलभृतमित्रश्रेणीबलावाप्तराज्यश्री:
3. cf. the epithet परमभट्टारकपादानुध्यात: which occurs in line 1 of this copper-plate with the more elaborate expression, अखिलभुवनमण्डलाभोगैकस्वामिना परमस्वामिना स्वयमुपहितराज्याभिषेक:, which occurs in later Maitraka grants.

22

SOME VERSES OF THE RISTHAL STONE SLAB INSCRIPTION*

This highly important inscription of great historical value discovered by Raghubir Singh, Mahārājkumar of Sitamau, has been edited and published in the Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India, X 96ff by K.V. Ramesh and S.P. Tewari. The following two verses of this inscription require reconsideration. Verse 15 runs as follows:

> "*Yaḥ sv-ānvaya-krama-pramparay-opayātām-āropitāṃ-guṇa-rasām-ahṛtena pittrā* (*1**)
> *Lok-opakāra-vidhaye na sukh-odayāya rāj-śriyaṃ śubha-phal-odayinīm vibhartti II*"

It has been translated by the learned editors as follows:

> "Who bore the noble royal grandeur which was the source of auspicious results, for the sake of helping his subjects and not for the mere creation of pleasure, that royal grandeur which had come down through proper successions in his own family and which had been thrust upon him and not appropriated by him from his father."

Here we beg to differ with the learned editors in the interpretation of the second *pāda* of this verse. The text of this verse does not contain, in our opinion, any words suggestive of the meaning 'not appropriated by him' unless the editors have attributed this meaning to the word *a-hṛtena*. However, we would like to point out that the

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**Dr. G.S. Gai, Felicitation Volume*, ed. K.V. Ramesh.

word *a-hṛtena* is in the Instrumental case and it goes with and qualifies the Instrumental noun *pitrā*. The word *hṛta* which literally means 'carried away', has also the sense of 'fascinated', 'captivated', 'lured' *etc.* Kālidāsa has used this word in the sense of being captivated or charmed in the following verse:

Tavāsmi gītarāgeṇa hāriṇā prasabhaṃ hṛtaḥ /
esh rājeva Duṣyantaḥ śāraṅgeṇāti-raṁhasā //[1]

"I have been forcibly carried away by the charming melody of your song like king Dushyanta by the highly fleet deer. "Another derivation from the verb *hṛ*, *i.e. hārin* also has the same meaning of 'charming' as in Bhāravi's famous saying: *hitaṃ manohārī ca durlabhaṃ vacaḥ* / "An utterance which is both beneficial and charming is rare." We think that the word *ahṛtena* in verse 15 of the Risthal inscription has to be translated as 'not fascinated'; and as it is in the Instrumental case it has to be connected with the word *pitrā*. The two words can be translated as "by the father who had not been captivated." The intended sense is that the father had not made over the royal power to his son merely having been carried away by paternal affection, but had planted it in the fertile soil of virtues. We would therefore translate this verse as follows:

> "Who holds the royal fortune which has approached him in the due order of succession in his own family, which leads to the accrual of auspicious benefits, and which has been planted by the father in the soil of virtues, for the sake of bestowing benefits on the subject, and not for the increase of his own comforts."

This verse seems to indicate that king Prakāśadharma's father had handed over to him, the reigns of the government, thinking that he was a worthy successor on account of his many qualities, just as a person sows seed in a fertile soil.

The next verse 16 runs as follows:

Ā-Toramāṇa-nṛpater=nṛp-mauli-ratna-jyotsnā-pratāna-
śablī-kṛta-pāda-pīthāṃ /

Hūṇ-ādhipasya bhuvi yena gataḥ pratiṣṭhām
nīto yudhā=vitathatām-Adhirāja-śabdaḥ ||

It has been translated as follows:

> "By him who had established himself in the kingdom of the Hūṇa ruler through his foot-stool being flooded with the brightness of the gems of the kingly crown of the king Toramāṇa, the word *adhirāja* was rendered factual in the battle."

In this verse, the word *Toramāṇa-nṛpateḥ* being in the ablative case, as is clearly shown by the presence of the proposition, *ā*, cannot be properly construed with the following compound ending in *pāda-pīthām* for the simple reason that the latter is in the accusative case. At the same time this cannot go with the word *pratiṣṭhām* in the third *pāda* of this verse. This difficulty can be solved by examining the reading in the last portion of the second *pāda*. What has been taken by the learned editors as a final *i.e halanta m*, appears to me to be a *halanta t*, as is indicated by the top being formed by a curve which hangs down on both sides and looks like a final *t*. Here we have to be careful that we do not mix up the left end of the long *ū* in *Hūṇā-dhipasya* with this final *t*. With our reading the second *pāda* of the verse will stand as *jyotsnā-pratāna-śablīkṛta-pāda-pīṭhāt*, and it will nicely fit with the words *ā-Toramāṇa-nṛpater*, which is in the ablative case.

We also differ with the learned editors regarding the syntax of *pādas*, three and four. Whereas the editors have construed these lines so as to indicate that the king Prakāśadharma had established himself in the kingdom of the Hūṇa ruler, we think the text if properly interpreted does not yield the meaning given by the editors. In our opinion the prose order of *pādas*, two and three should be like this:

Yena, Hūṇādhipasya, bhuvi pratiṣṭhām
gataḥ Adhirājaśabdāḥ yudhā vitathatāṃ nītaḥ

It should be rendered as, 'By whom the title of 'Overlord of kings' of the Hūṇa overlord which had got established on this earth, was rendered meaningless, by means of war.'

It is simply a poetic way of saying that having defeated Toramāṇa in battle, Prakāśadharma, put an end to Toramāṇa's status as emperor.

The verse 16 may therefore be translated as follows:

> "The title 'Overlord of kings' of the Hūṇa emperor, which had got well established on this earth, from the time of king Toramāṇa whose footstool was rendered variegated by the offshoots of lustre of the jewels in the crowns of kings, was rendered meaningless by means of war."

Verse 6 of this inscription runs as follows:

Bahalena yasya sakalaṃ paritaḥ parivṛṇvatā
jalamuc=eva viyat |
bala-reṇunā karabha-kaṇṭha-rucā sthagitā babhur=nna
Kiraṇās=savitūḥ ||

This has been translated as follows:

> "Even as the dark clouds stopped the rays of the Sun (from brightening the earth) so did the dust by his army and its elephant corps, spreading and covering all the atmosphere, indeed stop the rays of the sun."

There is nothing in the text of the verse which conveys the idea of an elephant corps. We have only mention of a young elephant (*karabha*) with the colour of whose throat the colour of the dust has been compared. The verse may be translated thus:

> "Whose great army having encompassed the entire (world) from all sides like a cloud (covering) the (entire) sky, the rays of the sun, covered by the copious dust (raised by) the army and having the colour of the throat of a young elephant did not shine forth."

The poet has compared the colour of the dust raised by the marching army of king Jayavardhana with the dark hue of the throat of a young elephant which is dark-brown. There is no mention of the elephant corps of the king.

Notes and References

1. *Abhijñanaśākuntalam* I.5.

23

THE BEARING OF THE HARAHA INSCRIPTION ON THE EPOCH OF THE GUPTA ERA*

In a note contributed to the I.C., IV, 104-5, Professor Dhirendranath Mookerji has sought to prove by the evidence of the Haraha inscription[1] that the epoch of the Gupta era as determined by Dr. Fleet is 'in error by at least a hundred years'.

His arguments are :

1. "That Sūryavarman was born sometimes about Vikrama year (611-21) 590, and Īśānavarman's glorious conquests were won and he became a Mahārājādhirāja at least about Vikrama year 589." Further, "in Mālava year 589 which is assumed to be identical with Vikrama year, Rajādhirāja Yaśodharman, Viṣṇuvardhana was reigning, thus making Mahārājādhirāja Īśānavarman Maukhari as his contemporary. This shows clearly that the Mālava and Vikrama years are not identical".
2. The Imperial Gupta monarch Mahārājādhirāja Kumāragupta son of Narasiṁhagupta Bālāditya was reigning in A.D. 532. From the Aphsad inscription[2] we learn that the later Gupta King Kumāragupta son of Jivitagupta I was a contemporary of and fought against Īśānavarman. Therefore this Kumāragupta must have flourished a little before A.D. 532 and Mahārājādhirāja Kumāragupta son of Narasiṁhagupta must be placed much earlier still.

Now as regards the first argument, it is true that Rājādhirāja Yaśodharman was reigning in the Mālava year 589 and it may also be admitted that Sūryavarmā was born in the Vikrama year 590. But there is nothing to force on us the corollary that Īśānavarman had achieved the victories and become a Mahārājādhirāja before that date. We know for certain that Īśānavarman was the first in his line to assume the title of Mahārājādhirāja,[3] or in other words the Maukharis became a sovereign power in northern India, only from the time of Īśānavarman. While we have no means of ascertaining the exact date when that sovereignty was established, it is certain that it must have taken sometime for Īśānavarman, after his accession, to launch his victorious campaigns. There is nothing in the inscription to indicate that Īśānavarman had achieved these conquests before the birth of Sūryavarman or 21 years before v.s. 611. It was natural for the author of the Haraha inscription to describe the achievements of Īśānavarman first and then pass on to his son. But that simply means that Īśānavarman had won these victories before the Haraha inscription was put up, *i.e.* before v.s. 611. There is no reason why we should necessarily date these conquests before the birth of Sūryavarman. Supposing that Īśānavarman's victorious career began 10 years after the birth of Sūryavarman, it must have taken him some years to subdue his rivals in northern India. At any rate he could not have become a Mahārājādhirāja before A.D. 542. Thus, as a Mahārājādhirāja he was not contemporaneous with Rājādhirāja Yaśodharman.

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*IC, V, (1938).

We know that Yaśodharman's wars and conquests were over and his power consolidated before A.D. 532 the date of Mandasor stone slab inscription. Considering his great achievements, it has to be conceded that it must have taken him at least 15 years to consolidate his power. His career began, therefore in *c.* A.D. 517.[4] Thus from 517 to 542 there is an interval of 25 years during which Yaśodharman had come and gone like a meteor. After his disappearance from the scene the overlordship of northern India had been once again thrown open and was a coveted object for every ambitious ruler. Īśānavarman taking advantage of the opportunity made a bold bid, and established his supremacy.

Thus there is nothing in the Haraha inscription that should convince us to give up the identification of the Mālava and Vikrama eras, suggested by Fleet and conclusively established by the Menalgadh inscription to which attention was first drawn by the late Professor Dr. F. Kielhorn.[5]

As to Professor Mookerji's second argument, there can be no dispute with regard to its first part, *i.e.* Kumāragupta son of Jīvitagupta I was a contemporary of Īśānavarman, except that instead of assigning the exact date A.D. 532 we might put him somewhere before A.D. 554. However, the second part of the argument is entirely unacceptable. It is uncritical to say definitely, that Mahārājādhirāja Kumāragupta, son of Narasiṅhagupta, has to be placed in *c.* A.D. 532 and thus Fleet's theory creates a conflict. There is at present a consensus of opinion[6] with only one dissentient voice that Kumāragupta son of Narasiṅhagupta ruled in A.D. 472. Thus it is clear that he flourished long before Kumāragupta of the Aphsad inscription, and the conflict is only imaginary rather than real. There is no authoritative evidence to place Mahārājādhirāja Kumāragupta II, son of Narasiṅhagupta as late as A.D. 532 except the pseudo-historical tale of the defeat of Mihirakula told by Hiuen Tsang. Thus it is clear, that Professor Mookerji's objections do not in any way upset the epoch of the Gupta era as determined by Fleet.

Notes and References

1. See *E.I.* XIV, 110ff.
2. *CII*, III, 200-208.
3. See the Maukhari genealogy as given in the Asirgadha copper seal (*CII*, III, 219f and the Nālandā clay seal, *E.I.* XXI, 73ff.
4. It should be specially noted that by this time the age of the Imperial Guptas had come to an end. The last Gupta Emperor was Bhānugupta who lost his sovereignty perhaps after the battle of Eran in 191 or A.D. 510.
5. See *I.A.* 1890, 316.
6. Mr. Panna Lal, I.C.S., Dr. Smith, Dr. H. Ray Chaudhri, Prof. R.D. Bannerji, all favour this view.

24

THE HARAHA INSCRIPTION AND EPOCH OF THE GUPTA ERA*

In the *New Indian Antiquary*, III, 437 Dhirendra Nath Mookerjee has published a rejoinder to my criticism of his views regarding the determination of the epoch of the Gupta era, in the light of information contained in the Haraha Inscription of Sūryyavarman. I had contended that the Haraha Inscription does not contain any information that can upset the epoch of the Gupta era as determined by Fleet, and subsequently modified by Sir Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar. Mookerjee's contention in his first note which appeared in the *Indian Culture*, IV, 104 was that if we identify the Mālava era with Vikrama era as Fleet did, then Yaśodharman for whom we have the date M.S. 589 will become a contemporary of the Emperor Īśānavarman who was ruling in Vikrama S. 611 or even in 589. This according to Mookerjee, is an impossibility, and the date of the Haraha inscription, therefore, indicates the incorrectness of Fleet's theory. In my note[1] I pointed out that Yaśodharman and Īśānavarman were not contemporaries, and there was no clash as supposed by Mookerjee. There was a sufficient interval between the two rulers. For Yaśodharman we have the date A.D. 532 while for Īśānavarman we have the date A.D. 554. Even if we concede that Yaśodharman continued to rule for ten years after the putting up of the Mandasor Inscription, it would mean that his reign ended in A.D. 542 while that of Īśānavarman began shortly before A.D. 554. The two were, therefore, predecessors and successors and not contemporaries. Mookerjee on the other hand, argues that Īśānavarman had become a Mahārājādhirāja at least about V.S. 590. Since at the time of the Haraha Inscription *i.e.* V.S. 611 his son Sūryyavarman must have been 21 years old

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**New Indian Antiquary*, V (1943).

so Īśāna's reign began in 611-21=v.s. 590. Evidently Mookerjee means to say that Sūryyavarman was born after Īśānavarman had assumed the title of Mahārājādhirāja. I, however, contended that there is nothing in the Haraha inscription to show that Sūryyavarman had been born when Īśāna was ruling the earth as a *Mahārājādhirāja*. Mookerjee has tried to ridicule this statement by quoting (or rather misrepresenting) the following words from the text of the Haraha Inscription :

यस्मिन शासति च क्षितिम् क्षितिपतौ·········श्रीसूर्यवर्माजनि ।

But a perusal of the verse in the original text will at once make it clear that either Mookerjee has not understood the text or has distorted it. The complete verse runs as follows :

ज्याघातव्रणरूढिकर्क्कशभुजव्याकृष्टशार्ङ्गच्युतान्
यस्यावाप्य पतत्रिणो रणमुखे प्राणानमुञ्चन्द्विषः ।
यस्मिन् शासति च क्षितिं क्षितिपतौ जातेव भूयस्त्रयी ।
तेन ध्वस्तकलिप्रवृत्तितिमरः श्रीसूर्य्यवर्म्माजनि ॥

Now, any Sanskritist can see that the locative absolute in यस्मिन् शासति च क्षितिम् has no connection whatsoever with the birth of Sūryyavarman, and is to be connected with the words जातेव भूयस्त्रयी meaning that when Iśāna was ruling, the Vedas were reborn as it were. The verb अजनि is to be connected with the subject तेन। The verse correctly translated simply states that "Sūryyavarman had been begotten by him (तेन) at the approach of whose arrows discharged from a bow drawn by the arm which was rough on account of the growth of the wound caused by the friction of the bowstring, the enemies gave up their lives, and while he was ruling the earth the Vedas were reborn as it were." अजनि is III Sg. Aorist (Passive). The Aorist 'simply expresses a past action indefinitely'.[2] Therefore this verse simply says that Sūryyavarman had been born sometimes in the past, and not necessarily *during the rule of* Īśānavarman. Further Mookerjee's statement is based on the presumption that Īśāna was a Mahārājādhirāja from the very commencement of his reign. He asserts on the authority of late N.G. Majumdar that the victories over the Āndhras, Gauḍas and Ṣūlikas, described in the Haraha and Jaunpur Inscriptions were won during the reign of

Īśvaravarman. But this itself is fatal to Mookerjee's theory, because we find that these victories did not bring about any change in the status of the Maukharis. Īśvaravarman remained a mere *Mahārāja* upto the time of his death. This is definitely proved by the Asirgadh and Nālanda seals of Śarvavarman[3] and the Nālanda clay seal of Avantivarman[4] where Īśvaravarman is styled as a Mahārāja and not a Mahārājādhirāja. It cannot be urged that since these victories were not achieved by Iśvaravarman, but by his son, the title of Īśvaravarman, remained unchanged. It is quite immaterial, whether the victories were won by the King, or by a Senāpati, or by a prince. The credit in all cases must go to the ruling monarch. It is, therefore, clear that Īśvaravarman never became a paramount sovereign during his lifetime, nor could his son assume that title before gaining fresh successes.

Mookerjee prefers the date v.s. 589, for the Haraha Inscription, taking अतिरिक्तेषु in the sense of 'superfluous', 'when 600 of autumns were superfluous by eleven'. But there is no instance of such a use of the verb अति रिच् । We should not, therefore, take it as expressive of redundancy. The date must be taken as 611 and not as 589. Even if, for the sake of argument, we may concede that the inscription was put up in v.s. 589 and Īśānavarman's reign had started much earlier, it will not make him a contemporary of Yaśodharman as an emperor, for we have seen above that even the victories over the Āndhras, Gauḍas and Ṣūlikas, had not entitled the Maukharis to claim the status of Mahārājādhirājas. That the Maukharis did not become an unrivalled imperial power in Northern India, upto a certain date in the reign of Īśānavarman himself, can be further proved with the aid of unimpeachable epigraphic evidence. In the Aphsad inscription of Ādityasena we are told that Kumāragupta churned the formidable milk-ocean (in the form) of the army of Īśānavarman—the cause of the acquisition of royal fortune.[5] It means that not only the Guptas in Magadha *had not* been reduced to the position of vassals, but to the contrary they were still powerful enough to inflict a severe defeat on the Maukhari armies led by Īśānavarman. Therefore, with the Guptas in Magadha unconquered, Īśāna could not have become the *Mahārājādhirāja* of the whole of northern India. Unfortunately we do not possess any dates for the reign of Kumāragupta who defeated Iśānavarman, but if we may assign to him the fifth Damodarpur copper plate dated 224=A.D. 542[6] it would definitely prove that Īśānavarman did not become a Mahārājādhirāja upto A.D. 542 and therefore, as such he was not a contemporary of Yaśodharman. Even on the authority of our present sources of information this can be asserted definitely that for sometime even after his accession to the throne Īśāna did not become the imperial overlord of northern India.

Mookerjee has adduced a new argument based on the dates 54 and 55 on the silver coins of Īśānavarman. He says, "These dates are evidently in the Śaka era with omitted hundreds...The first data Śaka (4)54 is exactly the year (v.s. 589) of the Haraha Inscription." He has quoted Rapson's authority that these dates belong to the Śaka era. But, in spite of the great authority of Prof. Rapson in the field of numismatics, I must say that he was wrong in referring these dates to the Śaka reckoning. The Śaka era was never in general use in northern India, much less in those territories which were ruled over by the Maukharis. The earliest instance of the use of the Śaka era in the inscriptions of northern India is supplied by the Baijnath inscription of the year 726 Śaka, from north eastern Punjab. In the united provinces the earliest known date is 784 in the Jain inscription from Deogarh, but even here it is not given as an independent date but only as an equivalent of the Vikrama date 919. Virtually there is no proof of the use of the Śaka era in north India either before or during the rule of the Maukharis. The era used in these territories was the Vikrama Samvat, and this era has been employed in dating the Haraha Inscription—the only dated inscription of the Maukharis. The Haraha inscription is an official record. If the Maukharis had adopted the Śaka era, as the official system of dating, we do not see any reason why there should have been a departure from the general practice, in the case of the Haraha inscription. It would be preposterous to suggest that the Maukharis employed the Śaka era for dating their coins and the Vikrama era for dating their inscriptions. The dates on the coins, evidently should be referred to a system of regnal years, commencing from the accession of Harivarman, the first ruler of the Maukhari dynasty.[7]

Mookerjee has next referred to some Chinese accounts—he does not mention the exact source—according to which an Indian Emperor Yuegnai of Kiapili sent an embassy to China in A.D. 428. He identifies Yuegnai with Yajñavarman Maukhari and Kiapili with Gaya, and questions that how could Kumāragupta I be ruling in A.D. 428, when we know on the authority of Chinese writers that Yajñavarma ruled over Magadha in A.D. 428. Apart from the philological difficulties[8] involved in Mookerjee's identification the entire statement is erroneous. The name of the Indian King who sent the embassy in A.D. 428, was You-aiand not Yuegnai.[9] Yue-ai in Chinese means 'Moon-loved'. The name of the Indian monarch was, therefore, something like चन्द्रप्रिय and not यज्ञवर्म्मा. Again Ka-pi-li is the territory of Kapili valley in Assam. It has been identified with Davāka[10] a kingdom mentioned in the Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta. Thus there is nothing in the Chinese accounts to contradict the fact that Kumāragupta I was ruling *c.* A.D. 428.

Mookerjee has taken very lightly the evidence of the Menalgadh inscription dated Mālava Samvat 1226, in which the date has been expressed thus:–मालवेशगत वत्सर... *etc.* Mookerjee very complacently remarks, "Everyone knows that Vikramāditya was lord of Mālava (Ujjaini-puravarādhīśvara) as well as of Magadha (Pāṭaliputra-varādhīśvāra)"; and concludes that Malaveśa here is synonymous with Vikramāditya. But Mookerjee forgets that his Vikramāditya *i.e.* Candragupta I was not the lord of Mālava. The Śakas ruled in Mālava till their overthrow by Candragupta II. Moreover Mālaveśa occurs in a compound form, and is not necessarily to be taken in the singular number, but may be taken in the plural—मालवेशानां संवत्सरः= मालवेशसंवत्सरः The Mālava era has actually been mentioned in this way in the Kaṇaśva inscription of Śivagaṇa: संवत्सरशतैर्यातैः सहपंचनवत्यर्गलैः। सप्तभिर्म्मालवेशानां मन्दिरं धूर्जटेः कृतम्।। Here मालवेशानाम् is evidently equal to मालवानाम् of the various Mandasor inscriptions and stands for the Mālava tribe, after whom the reckoning was known. That the Mālavas established this era and not merely handed it down is clear from the Mandasor inscription discovered by Shri M.B. Garde.[11]

Mookerjee's statement concerning Kumāragupta II is most ridiculous. He says, "We know that in Mālava year 524 Govindagupta son of Candragupta II was governor of Vaiśāli (not to speak of Mālava year 529 when his brother Kumāragupta I was ruling). Thus Mr. Jagannath cannot but admit that the interval between the known dates of Govindagupta and his great grandson Kumaragupta is one of six years only (or one year only between Kumāragupta I and his great-grandson". Here Mookerjee is lost in a labyrinth of his own making; and all the above statements are based on ignorance and misunderstanding. The sole evidence for Govindagupta's connection with Vaiśālī is the clay seal of his mother Mahādevī Dhruvasvāminī, discovered by Bloch from Basrah. In the seal Govindagupta is described not as a Mahārājādhirāja but simply as Mahārāja—a title given to princes, provincial governors and feudatory rulers. Mahādevī Dhruvasvāminī, the owner of the seal, is described as the wife of Mahārājādhirāja Śrī-Candragupta. Presumably, therefore, the seal belongs to the reign of Candragupta II, and Govinda was at Vaiśālī sometimes between 61-93 Gupta era of 436 and 468 Mālava years. As regards the date M.S. 524 it has been obtained from the new inscription from Mandasor. That inscription does not say that Govindagupta was ruling at Vaiśālī in the year 524 but on the other hand refers to him as a ruler who had died long ago.[12] Thus Mookerjee's conception of Govindagupta's rule in Vaiśālī in M.S. 524 is the creation of his own imagination, and the interval between him and his great grandson is not so ridiculously small as he wants to prove. Still more deplorable is the statement that Kumāragupta I was ruling in M.S. 529. Kumāragupta I was ruling when the temple was built in M.S. 493. Then we are told that after the lapse of considerable time, when other kings had come and gone, the temple was damaged and in the year M.S. 529 it was repaired.[13] This statement should have no doubt in our mind that Kumāragupta I had died long before M.S. 529 when the inscription was put up.

Mookerjee has made yet another important discovery. He says, "Kumāragupta I's son was Budhagupta wrongly read as Puragupta", and in support of this he refers to a note of S.K. Saraswati.[14] The correction of the legend on the Hoe specimen of Purugupta's coin proposed by Saraswati is hardly acceptable. Simply because the upper letter seems to have horizontal top stroke it can't be regarded as a *b* instead of *p*, for we must remember that there are numerous instances in the records of the Imperial Guptas where the top stroke of *p* has been made inordinately long *e.g.* compare the *p* in Kausthalapuraka in line 20, and प्रसभोद्धरण in line 21 of the Allahabad Inscription of Samudragupta and in विप्र and पित्रो: in lines 2 and 6 of the Eran inscription of Toramāṇa. When the letter is not quite distinct as in the present case, we can easily confuse it with *b*. If we closely examine the left hand vertical line of the upper letter on the coin we shall find that it is very thick at the top. In other words there is a top mark above. This would never happen in a *b* of this period which has not developed a top mark as yet. Therefore the letter has been correctly read as *p* and the proposed correction is unwarranted. Coming to the lower letter, it is surprising how any one could ever mistake it for a *dh*. Firstly this letter has a top mark, while *dh* in Gupta inscriptions never gets a top mark. The earliest example of *dh* with a top mark occurs in the Maitraka grants of the sixth century A.D. The lower letter on the coin is clearly a vertical line with a top mark, with no traces of a curve on its right. What Saraswati takes for the curve of *dh* or *ṣ* is in reality the curve of a letter in the marginal legend, and has nothing to do with this vertical line. The lower letter is, therefore, clearly a *r* and with no stretch of imagination can we make it either *dh* or *ṣ*. The name on the coin was correctly deciphered by Allan, and in an attempt to *find* gold coins of Budhagupta, we should not draw upon imagination. Even without going into the merits of Saraswati's suggestion we can confidently say that the name of Kumāragupta's son in the Bhitari seal is not Budhagupta. It is Puru (not Pura), as may clearly be seen on the Nālanda Seals.[15] That Budhagupta is not a son of Kumāragupta I but a later descendant, is evident from Budhagupta's own sealing now published by Hiranand.[16] It is futile to attempt to establish that Hiuen Tsang's Śakrāditya is Kumāragupta I and he must have been followed by Budhagupta. According to Hiuen Tsang Śakrāditya ruled not long after the death of Buddha. Should we then place Kumāragupta I sometimes in the 4th century B.C. and Candragupta I earlier still?

In the closing portion of his rejoinder Mookerjee remarks, "the tale told by Yuan Chwang is not in the least pseudo-historical as supposed by Mr. Jagannath and his authority the late Vincent Smith". Mookerjee again betrays his ignorance. V.A. Smith never rejected the account of Hiuen Tsang as untrue. Rather, he has attempted to reconcile the discrepancy between the pilgrim's account and the epigraphic evidence by suggesting the formation of a confederacy between Yaśodharman and Bālāditya. On the other hand I have followed the views held by Hoernle, J.J. Modi, and John Allan; and rejected Hiuen Tsang's version as untrue.

Notes and References

1. Published in *IC*, V, 335ff.
2. भूतसामान्ये लुङ् । The author of the Haraha inscription seems to be very fond of such passive constructions. In line 7 we have:

   तेनापीश्वरवर्म्मणः क्षितिपतेः क्षत्रप्रभावाप्तये
   जन्माकारि कृतात्मनः क्रतुगणेष्वाहूतवृत्तद्विषः ।
3. Fleet, *CII*, III, 219 and *E.I.* XXI, 75.
4. *E.I.* XXIV, 283ff.
5. भीमः श्रीशानक्षितिपतिशशितः सैन्यदुग्धोदसिन्धु-
   र्लक्ष्मीसंप्राप्तिहेतुः सपदि विमथितो मन्दरी भूय येन ।।
6. R.N. Dandekar, *History of the Guptas*, 171.
7. In passing we may also note another error of Mookerjee in referring the date 52 on the coins of Toramāṇa as equal to Mālava Sam. 588, and still believing that Toramāṇa's son Mihirakula was defeated in M.S. 589 by Yaśodharman. It is evident that after his defeat, Mihirakula, could not have enjoyed the Imperial status. From the Gwalior inscription we know that he ruled for 15 years as a Mahārājādhirāja. That means, his rule started at least 15 years before 589 *i.e. c.* M.S. 574. It is not absurd then, to suggest that Toramāṇa issued coins in M.S. 588?
8. For a Sanskrit word ending in *Varman* the Chinese equivalent ought to end in fa-mo *e.g.* Skt. पूर्णवर्मन्=Chinese Pu-lan-fa-mo, and for Skt. पुरी we should get Pu-li in Chinese, not pi-li.
9. cf. Watter *JRAS*, 1889, 540. The mistake committed by Capt. Wilford has been taken over by Mookerjee.
10. K.L. Barua, Early History of *Kāmarūpa*, 47 and R.M. Nath, *IC*, VI, 460.

11. cf. the words शरन्निशानाथकरामलाया: विक्व्यापके मालववंशकीर्तेः । The inscription is being edited in *E.I.* by Shri Garde himself and will appear shortly.
12. I would request Mr. Mookerjee to wait for the publication of the text of the inscription which is being edited by Garde and will shortly appear in the pages of the *E.I.* Here I may quote only these verses :

    गोविन्दवत्ख्यातगुणप्रभावं गोविन्दगुप्तोर्ज्जितनामधेयं ।
    वसुन्धरेशस्तनयं प्रजज्ञे स दित्यादित्यास्तनयैस्सरूपम् ।।
    यस्मिन्नृपैरस्तमितप्रतापैश्शिरोभिरालिङ्गितपादपद्मैः ।
    विचारदोलो विबुधाधिवोऽपि शङ्कापरीतः समुपाकरोत् ।।
    सेनापतिस्तस्य बभूव नाम्ना वाय्वादिना रक्षितपश्चिमेन ।
    यस्यारिसेनास्समुपेत्य सेनां न कस्यचिल्लोचनमार्गमीयुः ।।

13. बहुना समतीतेन कालेनान्यैश्च पार्थिवैः । व्यशीर्य्यतैकदेशोऽस्य भवनस्य ततोऽधुना ।।
    स्वयशोवृंद्धये सर्वमत्युदारमुदारया । संस्कारितमिदं भूयः श्रेण्या भानुमतो गृहम् ।।
14. A gold coin of Budhagupta, *I.C.*, I, 691-2.
15. See my article in the *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Lahore, 58.
16. *Nalanda and Its Epigraphic Material*, Mem. Arch. Sur. No. 66, 64.

25

AN INTERESTING CLAY SEALING FROM SUNET*

Sunet is a well-known ancient site, situated at a distance of about 3 miles from Ludhiana, on the Ludhiana-Jagraon Road. It is a very old site, and was known to Pāṇini.[1] It has yielded a large number of Yaudheya coins, coin moulds and the Seals with the interesting legend *Yaudheyānāṁ Jayamantradharāṇām*.

While on a visit to the site as an act of homage to the sacred memory of the brave Yaudheyas, I met a number of young school boys who were curious about my presence. On being told that their village was a very ancient place, they at once replied, 'Yes, there are a lot of earthen pice over here', and they showed me a few fragments of clay seals which form the subject of the present paper. There were six fragments, each containing a few Brāhmī letters. The largest of these is described below.

It is an oval sealing of grey colour measuring $\frac{7}{8}'' \times \frac{6}{8}''$. When complete the sealing appears to have been one inch in diameter. The writing is enclosed within a single border line. The average size of the letters is $\frac{1}{8}''$. The characters are early Brāhmī of about A.D. 200. They include a *m* of the so called Southern variety which is so common in the Kuṣāṇa inscriptions. The sealing contains the following brief inscription.

Dharmakartavya

In the present specimen the subscript *y* is partially lost, but there are other fragments (*See plate*) where it is quite well preserved, and therefore, there can be no doubt regarding the accuracy of the reading.

**JNSI*, XIX, 1957.

Now it is an interesting point for investigation as to what could be the purpose of this sealing. It may be suggested that it is a kind of votive offering, but Sunet is not known to have been a place of pilgrimage, and no traces of a religious edifice exist. Sunet was decidedly a Yaudheya administrative centre. There was a mint of the Yaudheyas here as is shown by the discovery of the clay moulds of coins at this place. I think, the present sealing is closely connected with the political struggle which the Yaudheyas carried on against the Kusāṇas.[2] To me, it seems that with the Yaudheyas, the liberation of their motherland was a sacred duty. The seals with the legend *Dharmakartavya*, *i.e.* 'sacred or religious duty', appear to have been manufactured in large numbers for distribution amongst the people as a token of the grim resolve of the Yaudheyas to continue the fight till the victory was achieved. We may compare with this the grim resolve of the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in the face of continuous German successes, and the terrible air bombing of London. Just as Churchill invented and popularised the symbol V for Victory and thus endeavoured to raise the morale of his people, the Yaudheyas by adopting the slogan *Dharmakartavya*, tried to infuse the spirit of religious obligation in the minds of the people to fight against the Kuṣāṇas.[3]

Notes and References

1. See V.S. Agrawal, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, 72 and 445.
2. See, A.S. Altekar, *Proceedings*, *Twelfth All India Oriental Conference*, Banaras, Vol. II, 513ff.
3. During the discussion, it was pointed out that the sealing may have purely a devotional significance, and reference was made to a Rajghat sealing having the legend *harismaraṇa*. But Rajghat was a sacred site visited by pilgrims and the priests of ancient Rajghat might have given the seals as a sort of *prasāda* to the pious visitors. As pointed out above, Sunet had no such sacred tradition.

26

SOME CLAY SEALINGS FROM SUNET*

Sunet is a well-known ancient site in the Punjab. It is situated at a distance of about three miles from Ludhiana, on the Ludhiana-Jagraon Road. The ancient ruins cover a fairly wide area and have yielded valuable antiquities exposed by rains. Yaudheya coins and coin-moulds have been discovered here in large numbers. Another class of antiquities is formed by clay sealings, of private individuals or religious shrines. A few of these sealings are described here.

No. 1.

This is a concave impression, on a lump of baked clay, of red colour.

In shape it is oval, measuring 1″ × 3/4″. It is divided into two parts by horizontal line drawn across. In the upper half there is a beautiful figure of a lion seated on its hind legs facing a tree. The lion is undoubtedly the work of a master artist of the Gupta Period. Its workmanship is superior to that of the Nālanda Sealing of Īśānasiṅha.[1] Below the horizontal line, there is the following inscription :

Śrī-Mātṛisomasya.

The characters belong to the Gupta Brahmi of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. and display the following characteristics. The letter *ma* belongs to the so called southern variety. In the north we have the type in the Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, in the Mathura inscription of Candragupta II of the year 61, and on some of the Gupta coins. The letter *sa* belongs to the eastern variety. It has a loop at the bottom on the left handside just as in the Allahabad inscriptions of Samudragupta

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**JNSI*, XX (1958).

The letters are very beautifully drawn and show considerable skill in the art of die-cutting.

No. 2.

There are three specimens of this sealing, one of which is very clear, the other two are somewhat defaced. All the three are of baked clay—two are reddish in colour while the third has become blackish in the process of baking. The inscriptions on them indicate that, these were offered as devotional presents at a shrine where the deities worshipped were Śiva and Viṣṇu.[2] We are already familiar with small clay sealings inscribed with the Buddhist creed, offered at Buddhist places of worship. These sealings are flat and the inscribed surface which is enclosed by a border line is oval in shape. The measurements are 1″ × 7/8″. One of the specimens is inscribed on both sides. The inscription on the reverse has been put in a concave depression, obviously made by the convex face of the die.

The writing on the obverse consists of two lines and runs as follows :

1. *Saṅkara-nā.*
2. *Rāyaṇābhyām.*

The reverse has a single line of writing. It runs :

1. *Śrī Mātṛiśarmaṇaḥ*

The characters belong to the Brahmi of 3rd or 4th century A.D. They display the following characteristics : *ra* has got an additional curve at the bottom turning to the left, *na* belongs to the Northern variety, whereas *ma* is of the Kuṣāṇa type.

No. 3.

This is a small piece of light brown colour which is inscribed on both sides. The writing on the obverse is enclosed within an oval shaped border. There is a trident at the top. Below the trident is a single line of writing which runs as follows :

Śrī-Sthānasya (Of Śrīsthāna). Śrīsthāna may be a place name, or a shrine of the goddess of wealth.

The reverse has a trident, and a brief inscription enclosed within an oval border. This face measures 3/4″ × 1/2″.

The writing consists of three letters which are damaged, and illegible. The last is a conjunct, *ṅśa.*

No. 4.

This is on a comparatively bigger lump of clay which has been baked red. The sealing is oval in shape and measures 1″ × 7/8″. In the upper part there is an emblem which is quite worn out. Possibly, the figure is that of *garuḍa*. Below the emblem is a single line of writing, which runs as follows :

Śrī-Kri [ṣṇa] guptasya.

The characters belong to the northern variety of Gupta alphabet. The seal presumably belongs to a private individual, as no royal titles such as *Mahārāja* or *Mahārājādhirāja* have been used.

Notes and References

1. *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 66, Plate IX(e).
2. Attention of scholars may be invited to the manuscript of a work named *Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa-māhtmya*, mentioned in the Catalogue of the Mackenzie Collection, I, 88.

27

A RARE CLAY SEALING FROM SUNET*

The village of Sunet, locally known as Uchchapind is situated on the Ludhiana-Ferozepur road at a distance of about three miles from Ludhiana, the headquarters of the District of the same name, in the Panjab. The extensive mound at Sunet has yielded a number of coins and seals belonging to the period beginning with the Indo-Greeks and ending with the advent of the Hūṇas. The copper coins, coin-moulds and clay-sealings of the Yaudheyas, have been found in large quantities. Sealings of private individuals with beautiful emblems have also come to light. The present sealing is however of unusual interest. It was brought to my notice by Shri G.B. Sharma of IAF, Ambala, and I am thankful to him for permitting me to publish it.

This sealing is like so many others of baked clay and of reddish brown colour. It is oval in shape and has a border of a single line. There is no emblem. Its diameter is .74 inches.

The writing consists of a single line. The characters belong to the northern variety of Brāhmī of the fourth century A.D. The legend reads as follows:

Srī-r-Guptasya

(This seal) belongs to Mr. Gupta.

In the absence of any royal titles, this cannot be definitely attributed to Mahārāja Gupta—the founder of the Imperial Gupta dynasty. Still it is of considerable interest in as much as it provides the only known instance – other than that of the name of the founder of the Gupta dyansty – of the use of the word Gupta as full name. The

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**JNSI*, XXVII (1965).

students of Gupta history are familiar with the controversy regarding the correct form of the name of the first Gupta king. While, Lassen, Bühler, Fleet, and Allan held that it was Gupta, V.A. Smith had argued that it should be Śrī-gupta. He advanced the following arguments :

1. The past participle formation *Gupta* meaning protected can hardly stand for a proper name.
2. The Chinese pilgrim Itsing speaks of a king Ci-li-ki-to *i.e.* Śrīgupta, who flourished five hundred years before his time.[1]
3. Śrī-gupta gives a perfectly good sense *viz.* protected by Lakṣmī.

Fleet clearly established that the name is Gupta. He pointed out that Śrī is only used as an honorific with the name wherever it occurs in the Gupta inscriptions. Had the proper name been Śrī-gupta it would have been preceded by another Śrī. In spite of Fleet's forceful reasoning, R. D. Bannerji preferred to call the first Gupta monarch as Śrī-Gupta.[2]

The credit of pointing out for the first time a clear instance of the use of the word Gupta alone as a proper name goes to B. Ch. Chhabra, who quotes its use in *Viṣṇusahasranāma* as a synonym for Viṣṇu.[3] The present seal furnishes, another instance and thus confirms the view of Lassen, Bühler, Fleet, Allan and Chhabra.[4]

Notes and References

1. *IA*, X, 110.
2. *cf. Age of the Imperial Guptas*, 9.
3. *JNSI*, IX, (1947), 137-139.
4. On the use of the word Śrī, see Rapson, *JRAS*, 1901, 99-101.

28

NEW LIGHT ON AN EXPLOIT OF THE PRATIHĀRA EMPEROR, MAHENDRAPĀLA*

During the long drawn out contest for supremacy between the Gurjara Pratihāras and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, the history of Mālava is marked by vicissitudes. The founder of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa empire, Dantidurga, is said to have performed the *Hiraṇyagarbha-dāna* ceremony at Ujjain. On this occasion, the Gurjara king was made to serve, as a door-keeper. This implies the acceptance of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa overlordship by the ruler of Mālava. Next, in A.D. 783 the Gurjara-Pratihāra monarch Vatsarāja, lord of Avanti, was ruling over the western quarter, as stated by Jinasena in his Harivaṃśa Purāṇa.[1] It is apparent from this statement that the Pratihāra monarch was quite independent and had ceased to owe allegience to the Rāṣṭrakūṭa emperor. We further learn from Rāṣṭrakūṭa records that Govinda II sought the help of the Mālava ruler in his conflict with his own younger brother Dhruva. However, soon after the overthrow of Govinda, the Pratihāra emperor Vatsarāja suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of Dhruva, and had to retire to the desert regions of Rajasthan.[2] The Rāṣṭrakūṭas now occupied Mālava, and their hold over this region continued during the succeeding reign of Govinda III, the son of Dhruva, when we find Indra, the younger brother of Govinda III, ruling over this region as the Viceroy. The Pratihāra emperor Nāgabhaṭa II, who had recaptured Kannauj from the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, seems to have concentrated on strengthening his hold on the prized possession of Kannauj, and Mālava was left in the hands of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. In the Sanjan Plates of Amoghavarṣa, Govinda III,

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**VIJ*, X (1972).

whose reign lasted upto A.D. 814, is expressly credited with the possession of Mālava.[3] During the reign of the next Rāṣṭrakūṭa emperor, Amoghavarṣa Śrīvallabha (A.D. 814-78), Mālava was being governed by a Rāṣṭrakūṭa feudatory, Parabala, whose Pathari Stone Pillar inscription[4] dated V.S. 917 (A.D. 860), proves it beyond the possibility of a doubt. Parabala is described in this record as the son of Karka of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa lineage. The Pratihāra emperor, Mihira Bhoja, who attempted to recover Mālava from the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, did not fare better than his predecessors. He suffered a defeat at the hands of Dhārāvarṣa, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa ruler of the Gujarat branch. In the Bagumra grant of Dhruva III, dated Saka 789, *i.e.* A.D. 867, it is stated that, "though, Mihira was united to the Fortune and surrounded by crowds of noble kinsmen, though owing to his courage, he conquered (all) the regions of the world, he nevertheless, disappeared, his face being covered by the darkness of defeat, after he had looked upon the eminence of Dhārāvarṣa, that was greater than his own."[5] The ascendency of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas in Mālava is further testified by the Begumra grant of Akālavarṣa Kṛṣṇarāja dated Śaka 810, *i.e.* A.D. 878, where we are told that he conquered his enemies in Ujjayini and raised his fame aloft.[6] After this survey of epigraphic evidence, the conclusion seems to be justified that right up to A.D. 878 Mihira Bhoja had not succeeded in reconquering the Mālava region.

There was better luck in store for Bhoja's son and successor, Mahendrapāla. In the undated Pehowa inscription, we come across the statement that Mahendrapāla, who had overcome his enemies, was capable of uniting his family with prosperity, tearing the mind of Parabala on all sides.[7] While, the word *parabala* can be translated as a common noun meaning 'the military force of the enemy, it can be equally well interpreted as a proper noun, referring to the Rāṣṭrakūṭa ruler of Mālava, mentioned in the Pathari inscription already referred to. If this interpretation be accepted, it would mean that Mahendrapāla dislodged the Rāṣṭrakūṭa feudatory from Mālava, and thus augmented the fortunes of his family. The writer of this *praśasti* has employed double entendre (*śleṣa*) elsewhere also in this record, for instance in verses 9 and 12. It is most likely, therefore, that

Parabala of the Pehowa inscription, stands for the Mālava ruler of that name, and it is Mahendrapāla's victory over this ruler that was the source of the rise in the fortunes of his family.

The above suggestion may appear to involve a chronological hurdle, since Parabala is seen to be ruling in A.D. 860-61 whereas Mahendrapāla ascended the throne in A.D. 885-86. However, the difficulty can be tided over very easily. In case Parabala came to the throne shortly before 860-61 and had a reign of thirty years, he, easily becomes a contemporary of Mahendrapāla. We may therefore conclude that Mālava which had been lost to the Pratihāras in the reign of Vatsarāja was recovered by Mahendrapāla in *c.* A.D. 890.

Notes and References

1. शाकेष्वब्दशतेषु सप्तषु दिशां पञ्चोतरेषूत्तरां
पातीन्द्रायुधनान्मि कृष्णनृपजे श्रीवल्लभे दक्षिणाम् ।
पूर्वां श्रीमदवन्तिभूभृति नृपे वत्सादिराजेऽपरां
सौराणामधिमण्डले जययुते वीरे वराहेऽवति ।।

2. *cf.* हेलास्वीकृतगौडराज्यकमलामत्तं प्रवेश्याचिराद् ।
दुर्मागम्मरुमध्यमप्रतिबलैर्यो वत्सराजं बलैः ।।
I.A., 11 (1882) 157.

3. ततः प्रतिनिवृत्य तत्प्रकृतिभृत्यकर्मेत्ययं प्रतापमिव नर्म्मदातटमनुप्रयातः पुनः ।
सकोशलकलिङ्गवेगिड़हलौडकान्मालवान् विलभ्य निजसेवकैः स्वयमवूभुजद्विक्रमः ।।
EI, 18, 245, lines 23-24.

4. *EI*, 9 (1906-7) 248ff.

5. धारावर्षसमुन्नतिं गुरुतरामालोक्य लक्ष्मीयुतो
धामव्याप्तदिगन्तरोऽपि मिहिरः सद्वश्यावाहान्वितः ।
यातः सोऽपि शमं पराभवतमोव्याप्ताननः किं पुन-
र्येऽतीवामलतेजसा विरहिता हीनाश्च दीना भुवि ।।
IA, 12 (1883) 184, verse 41.

6. येन खड्गद्वितीयेन वल्लभनृपस्य पश्यतः ।
उज्जयिन्यां रिपूञ्जित्वा दूरमुत्तम्भितं यशः ।।
Ibid., 13 (1884), 68, verse 23.

7. यश्शक्तः स्वकुलं × × × मृद्ध्या
भिन्दानः परबलमानसं समन्तात् ।
सश्श्रीमाञ्जयति महेन्द्रपालदेवः
शान्तारिश्शशधरसुन्दरः शरण्यः ।।
EI, (1892) 242-50.

29

THE DEWAI INSCRIPTION OF BHĪMADEVA ŚĀHI AND ITS HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

This short but historically very interesting inscription is engraved on a small rectangular slab of stone which is preserved in the Central Museum, Lahore (Pakistan). The inscription was published by R.B. Daya Ram Sahni in *Epigraphia Indica*, XXI with a plate at pages 298ff. The text of the inscription as given by Sahni is as follows:

1. श्री कलार [पा] ल-वङ्शोद्भव-
2. गदाहस्त-परमभटा (ट्टा) [र]-
3. क महाराजाधिराज-पर-
4. मेश्वर शाहि-भी [म]दे[व] [।।*]

It may be noted that there is a crack in the stone and the first line of the inscription has suffered damage about its middle. The present writer happens to possess an estampage of this inscription, prepared by himself from the stone in the Museum, when he was at Lahore before 1947. A careful examination of the estampage shows that in spite of the damage to the stone, only one letter is lost and the remaining letters can be made out. Our effort has resulted in deciphering the first line as follows:

[*śri*] *Kala* (*lā*) *ra* [*pā**] *la-vaṅś=odhbha* [*va**]

What had been read as *rmo* by Sahni is really *ṅśo*, the upper letter is in the conjunct being sufficiently clear. It cannot be a *r*. With the new reading we are enabled to find out definitely the name of the founder of the Śāhi dynasty, regarding which there has been a lot of discussion.

Al-Beruni has given the following account of the Śāhi rulers "The Hindus had kings residing in Kabul, Turks were said to be of

Tibetan origin. One of this series of kings was Kanik, the same who is said to have built the *Vihāra* at Purushāvar. The last king of this race was Lagatūrmān and his Wazir was Kallāra, a Brahman. The latter had been fortunate, in so far as he had found by accident hidden treasures, which gave him much influence and power. In consequence, the last of the Tibetan house after it had held the royal power for so long a period let it by degree slip from his hand. Besides Lagatūrmān had bad manners and a worse behaviour, on account of which people complained of him greatly to the Wazir. Now the Wazir put him in chains and imprisoned him for correction, but then he himself found ruling sweet, his riches enabled him to carry out his plans and so he occupied the royal throne."[1]

Here Al-Beruni has clearly stated that the Wazir Kallāra usurped the throne of the Turkish line and started his new line. Al-Beruni's statement carries much weight for he was almost contemporary of the latter Śāhi rulers—Trilocanapāla (1013-1021) and Bhīmapāla II (1021-1026). Kalhaṇa, however tells about a very powerful Śāhi king named Lalliya. He says, "The illustrious Lalliya Śāhi in whose town of Udbhāṇḍa kings found safety, whose mighty glory [outshone] the kings in the north, just as the Sun-disc [outshines] the stars in, the heaven, he was not received into service by Śaṅkaravarman who desired to remove him for his sovereign position.[2] Here Kalhaṇa speaks of a powerful Śāhi ruler whom even Śaṅkaravarman the powerful ruler of Kashmir could not subdue. Kalhaṇa again speaks of a Śāhi ruler who had rebelled against the king of Kashmir in the time of Gopālavarman (A.D. 902-04) whose "Superintendent of treasury, Prabhākaradeva, vanquished the Śāhi king at Udbhāṇḍapura, and bestowed the kingdom of the rebellious Śāhi upon Toramāṇa, Lalliya's son and gave him the name Kamaluka".[3]

These statements of Kalhaṇa complicate matters. Al-Beruni, the Śāhi coins and inscriptions discovered so far do not bring on record any Śāhi kings of the names of Lalliya and Toramāṇa. Kamaluka of-course is known from Al-Beruni as Kamālū and as the successor of Sāmand (*i.e.* Sāmantadeva) who appears to have been a very powerful Śāhi emperor, whose billon coins are still found in abundance in Panjab and whose type was copied by successive generations of kings—including the successors of Mahmud, the Tomaras and the Cāhamānas. Kalhaṇa does not mention his name. He may or may not be the father of Kamaluka who certainly succeeded Sāmantadeva. It is difficult to believe Kalhaṇa's statement, that the Śāhi king who according to us was no other than Sāmantadeva, could have been defeated by the treasury officer of the minor king Gopālavarman of Kashmir. Kalhaṇa's testimony is further discredited by giving to Kamaluka the Turkish name Toramāṇa whom we know from Al-Beruni as the last king of the Turki dynasty overthrown by Kallāra.

Stein is of the view that Kallāra of Al-Beruni, and Lalliya of Kalhaṇa are identical. He has supported his view by quoting Seybold, who expressed the view that the reading Kallāra in the Arabic text is a mis-reading. In the Arabic script Kallāra can be confused with Lalliya.[4] But none of the two scholars have explained why no coins bearing this name—Lalliya—have come to light in spite of the fact that Śāhi coins are by no means rare.

The present inscription from Dewai, completely justifies the reading Kallāra in Al-Beruni's *Kitab-ul-Hind*, and he is the founder of a dynasty as is clearly established by the words—*Kallārapāla-vaṅśo-dbhava*, an offshoot of the dynasty of Kallārapāla.

Notes and References

1. Al-Beruni's *Kitab-ul-Hind*, Eng. Tr. by Sachau, II, 10-13 (original ed.).
2. *Rāj.* Eng. Tr. by Stein, I, 206, [text verses V, 152-55].
3. *ibid.*, I, 217, [text verses V. 232-33].
4. *Rāj.* Eng. Tr., II, 336.

30

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE HUND INSCRIPTION OF THE REIGN OF JAYAPĀLA ŚĀHI, DATED 146 (ŚĀHI ERA)*

This stone inscription which has thrown very welcome light on the history of the Śāhi dynasty of Udbhāṇḍapura, commonly called the Hindu Śāhis of Kabul and Punjab, has been brought to light in the course of the comprehensive search for the Śāhi records, carried out by Abdur Rehman, who has published the text together with an English translation and copious notes in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1978, 31 to 37. Rehman has made a singularly important contribution to the history of the Śāhi dynasty, by suggesting that the dates in the inscriptions of the Śāhis should be referred to an era founded by Kallār, the founder of the dynasty, in A.D. 850. Rehman has rightly called this era as the Śāhi era. However, some of the verses and expressions in this inscription of Jayapāla have not been correctly interpreted by the learned editor; and in one case his rendering of verse 8, he has been led to draw wrong historical conclusions. Therefore the need for a re-appraisal is both apparent and urgent.

The text of verse 5 as given by Rehman, runs as follows:

Yatra Sindhus-sadā lokais=sevyate puṇya-hetunā |
Sannihityeva candrārkam balād=gṛhṇati dānave ||

It has been translated by him thus:

> "Where the Indus is always served (*i.e.* worshipped) by the people to obtain merit, when the demon is forcibly seizing moon and sun, as though bringing them together."

**JRAS*

The learned editor has missed the real significance of the simile conveyed by the expression *Sannihity=eva.* Which we break this euphonic combination, we get the words *Sannihityā** and *iva*, meaning like Sannihityā which does not mean here 'proximity' as the learned editor has understood it; but it refers to the name of the holiest of tanks at Kurukṣetra, the importance of which becomes clear in the light of information supplied by the *Mahābhārata* as well as by the still prevalent belief amongst the Hindus. In Book III (*Āraṇyaka Parva*) Chapter 81 of the Great Epic, we have an account of the various sacred places; and we quote here the relevant verses pertaining to the sacred tank in Kurukshetra:

> "*Yatra Brahm=ādayo devā ṛṣayaś=ca tapodhanāḥ |*
> *māsi māsi samāyānti puṇyena mahat=ānvitā ||*
> *Saṃnihatyā=mupaspṛśya Rāhu-graste divākare |*
> *Aśvamedha-śataṃ tena iṣṭam bhavati śāśvatam ||*"[1]
>
> "Having bathed in the Saṃnihitya, where the gods—Brahmā and others and the sages rich in penance, come together every month, possessed of great religious merit, when the sun has been eclipsed (*lit.* devoured) by Rāhu, a century of horse-sacrifices becomes performed for all times by that person (or by virtue of this bathing)."

The author of the inscription, has in this verse described the sanctity of the river Indus as higher even than that of the most sacred tank of Sannihiti, for whereas the people go for a bath to Sannihiti only on the occasion of the lunar and soler eclipses, they resort to the Sindhu, always.

The fifth verse should therefore be translated as follows:

> "Where the Indus is always resorted to by the people on account of religious merit (accruing from this act), just as the Sannihatya (is resorted to at the time) when the demon (Rāhu) forcibly seizes the moon and the Sun (*i.e.* on the occasion of the lunar and solar eclipses)."

Also, verse 8 of this inscription has not been interpreted correc-

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*See note 5.

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tly. Consequently its sense remains obscure. The text of this verse as given by Rehman, runs as follows:

Bhīmen=āpi sva-dagdhasya saṃbhavo=sti Pinākinā /
Samkalpa-yones=saṃkalpān-na tu Bhimen vairiṇā //

It has been translated thus:

"Though he is terrible through Pinākin (Śiva) there is the (re) birth of him whose origin was desire, (*i.e.* Kāma, the love-god) who was burnt up by himself (*i.e.* by Śiva) through (Śiva's desire) but not through the terrible enemy (was Bhīma restored to life)."

Now this translation does not make much sense. However the verse will become perfectly clear if it is construed after establishing a proper order of its words. The proper prose order of this verse is as follows:

Bhīmen api Pinākinā saṃkalpāt svadagdhasya Saṃkalpayoneḥ saṃbhavo=sti, na tu vairiṇā Bhīmen saṃkalpāt sva-dagdhasya (Śatroḥ).

It has to be realised that whereas the first word *bhīma* occurring in the first quarter of the verse is an adjective qualifying the god Pinākin, the second word Bhīma occurring in the fourth quarter of this verse is a proper noun and stands for the Śāhi ruler of that name. The verse may be translated thus:

"The (re-) birth of Cupid (*lit.* the mind-born) who has been burnt by the terrible Śiva (*lit.* the wielder of the trident) by his (mere) mental resolve, is possible; but not of one who has been burnt (*i.e.* destroyed) by Bhīma, the enemy, by his resolve."

The writer means to say that there can be no chance of the revival of power of the enemy who has been destroyed by the Śāhi ruler Bhīma.

The faulty translation of this verse has led Rehman to draw a wrong conclusion, *viz.* that "verse VIII of the inscription seems to imply that Bhīma was killed in battle."[2] Far from having such an implication, even remotely, the verse explicitly states that there was no chance at all for an enemy to recover, once he had been destroyed by Bhīma's resolve. The author of the inscription tells us clearly that Bhīma was a more terrible destroyer even than Śiva himself, who in Hindu mythology is assigned the function of destruction.

As noted by Rehman, the text of verse 10 presents some difficulty in its interpretation. He has read it as follows:

Yasya vairi-vilāsinyo niryāntyo nagarād=iha |
idam=ūcur=mah-odyānam tu dronas=saṃgataṃ tvayā ||

He has translated it thus:

> "The charming women of whose enemies, going out from the city here, said this: "Through you the great park has become a (mere) bucket.' "

Rehman was himself conscious of the clumsiness of this statement, and has observed that "The comparison seems strange and inept, but I can suggest no better reading."[3] Here we would like to amend the reading *dronas* and read *dyaur=nas*. *Dyau* means paradise and *nas=naḥ* meaning 'for us'. With this emendation, the verse can be translated as follows:

> "The coquettish women of whose enemies, going out from this city here, remarked thus: 'accompanied by you, this great garden (has been) for us, a paradise.'

The coquettish ladies of the enemies who had perhaps been captured in a war and brought to the great garden of the capital, when leaving it after sporting with Bhīma, remarked that in his company, they felt like *apsarās* (heavenly nymphs) sporting in the garden of paradise.

There are two minor points which also require looking into. In the second verse occurs the word *Khyāti* which has been translated by Rehman as 'fame', which is no doubt one of the meanings of this word. However this meaning does not suit the present context. Moreover, the editor's rendering "may I produce fame" is not a happy expression. The word *Khyāti* has been used in the present context in the sense of *praśasti* meaning a 'eulogistic poem' or composition.

Further the rendering ‘realm’ for *ālaya* in the same verse is not strictly speaking accurate and should be rendered as ‘abode’ or ‘temple’, for which the word *devālaya* is so well-known. The second half of verse 2 may better be rendered as:

> “I shall compose (*lit.* make) a eulogistic poem in the temple of Śiva (*lit.* the black throated one).”

Lastly the prose sentence at the end of the inscription *viz.*, *Kṛtir=iyam pratiṣṭhā ca kayastha-Pāḍhida-pautrasya Paṅgula-sūnoḥ Caṅgulas*(*y*) *a*, has been rendered by Rehman as follows: “This establishment is the work of Caṅgula, grandson of the secretary Pāḍhida and son of Paṅgula. “It has to be noted that the original Sanskrit text has two words *kṛti* and *pratiṣṭhā* connected by the conjunctive particle *ca*. In the translation, the meanings of both of these have not been properly brought out. *Kṛti* obviously refers to the poetic matter given in the inscription and *pratiṣṭhā* refers to the consecration of Śiva’s idol as has been actually stated in verse 13 of this inscription.[4] Moreover, ‘Secretary’ is not a happy rendering for the Sanskrit word *kāyastha*. For aught we know, it had become more or less an appellation for a particular caste, by the time of our inscription, though originally it meant only ‘a clerk’. So here too it may be rendered as ‘scribe’ or retained as the proper name of the caste. The prose sentence may be translated as follows:

> “This (eulogistic) composition and the consecration of the idol (is the work) of Caṅgula, the grandson of the Kāyastha Pāḍhida and son of Paṅgula.”

Notes and References

1. Mahābhārata, Poona Critical Edition of *B.O.R.I.*, III. 81, 166-67. The following verses from the Gita Press Gorakhpur Edition of the Mahābhārata are also worth quoting :

   Udapānānī vāpyaś=ca tīrthany=āyatanāni ca/
   Nihsamsayam=amavasyam samesyanti naradhipa//
   Masi-masi nara-vyaghra Sannihatyam na samsayah/
   Tirtha-samnihanad=eva Samnihaty=eti visruta//

   III, 83, 194-95

"O King, the wells, the artisan wells, places of pilgrimage, and the sanctuaries of sacrifices, will undoubtedly come together, every month on the last day of the dark fortnight, at Sannihiti. O tiger among men! On account of the gathering together of the sacred places, Sannihatya has become well-known as such."

2. *JRAS*, 1978, 34.
3. *JRAS*, 1978, 37, n. 22.
4. *cf*. the words *Umanatha pratistitah*.
5. The name of this sacred tank is written as *Samnihitī* in this inscription. That is also the reading in the Agni Purāṇa. The Gīta Press edition of the Mahābhārata gives *Saṃnihiti* in III, 83, 190, and the variant *Saṃnihatyā* in III, 83, 195.

31

SILVER COINS OF QUTBUDDIN AIBAK*

The silver coins of Qutb-ud-din Aibak, the first of the Sultans of the Slave Dynasty of Delhi (1206-1210), have remained in oblivion, so far. Even the exhaustive *Corpus* of the coins of the Sultans of Delhi, prepared by the distinguished numismatist H. Nelson Wright, under the title *The Coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi*, in which he endeavoured to incorporate not only all the recorded coins of the Sultans of Delhi, but also unpublished coins in private collections to which he could obtain access, does not contain any mention of Qutb-ud-din's silver coinage. Only his copper coins are recorded in that exhaustive *Catalogue*.

However, the extremely rich coin collection of the Central Museum, Lahore (now in Pakistan), possesses these silver coins of Aibak, which were not recognised as such, as the legend on these coins was in Devanāgarī, and the name has been Indianised to such an extent that it is not possible to identify it easily.

Rodgers, in his *Catalogue* of the Government Museum, Lahore, Volume I, has recorded amongst the coins of 'the Brāhmaṇa kings of Kabul', the silver coins of a ruler named Khadavayaka. He has described them at page 37 of this *Catalogue*, as follows:

> Silver, Average weight 48.4; size.72″.
>
> *Obverse*: Bull to left, couchant, over it स्री खवदवयक (Sri Khavadavayaka).
>
> *Reverse*: Horseman to right m. 257 to right m. 258 to 1.

Again, in Volume II, of the same *Catalogue*, Rodgers recorded there silver coins at page 19, and has described them as follows:

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*JNSI, XXXV.

Average weight 47.0; size 0.75."

Obverse: Bull seated to left, over it श्री ख्वदवयक; star to left.

Reverse: Horseman to r, To l n to r. عدل

The presence of the word عدل written in Persian-Arabic script, at once makes it clear that these coins do not belong to any of the (Brāhmaṇa) Shāhi Kings of Kabul, for amongst the hundreds of their coins with the Bull and Horseman device, there is not a single coin discovered so far, which has any Persian or Arabic legend. On the other hand the word عدل frequently occurs on the coins of the early Muslim rulers. For instance, on the copper coins of Muhammad bin Sām,[1] it occurs on the reverse; and a large number of copper coins of Shams-ud-din Iltitimash, has it on the obverse.[2] Therefore, the word عدل connects these silver coins with the coins of the early Sultans of Delhi.

Now there remains the identification of the ruler whose name in Devanāgarī is given as *Khvadavayaka*. The clue to this identification is supplied by the Palam Baoli, Inscription, of the reign of Ghyas-ud-din Balban of Vikram Saṁvat, 1333.[3] In line 2 of this inscription, the author begins the genealogy of the ruling dynasty of Delhi, in the following words:

आदौ साहवदीनस्ततः पु(खु) दुवदीन भूपालः ।

"At first there was Sāhib Din (Shihāb-ud-din) and then the king Khuduvadin." We can at once see that Khuduvadin, who comes after Shihāb Ghori in the Sanskrit inscription is none other than Qutbud-dīn Aibak who succeeded Ghori on the throne of Delhi. The Devanāgarī legend on these coins, is, evidently a contraction of the first part of the name Qutb, which has been changed by the Sanskrit writer, into *Khuduva*. The title Aibak has become वयक in the pronunciation of the Sanskrit writer. Thus ख्वदवयक of the coin legends represents Qutubuddin Aibak, the Slave Sultan of Delhi.

Thus, the three silver coins, placed by Rodgers in the coinage of the 'Brāhmaṇa Kings of Kabul' have to be assigned to Qutb-ud-din Aibak, who, like his predecessor, continued to issue coins of the Bull and Horseman type, as had been done by several rulers of the Yamini dynasty before them.

Notes and References

1. Nos. 3-31 at page 10 of Nelson Wright, *Coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi.*
2. *ibid.*, 31.
3. *JASB*, XLIII (1974), 138.

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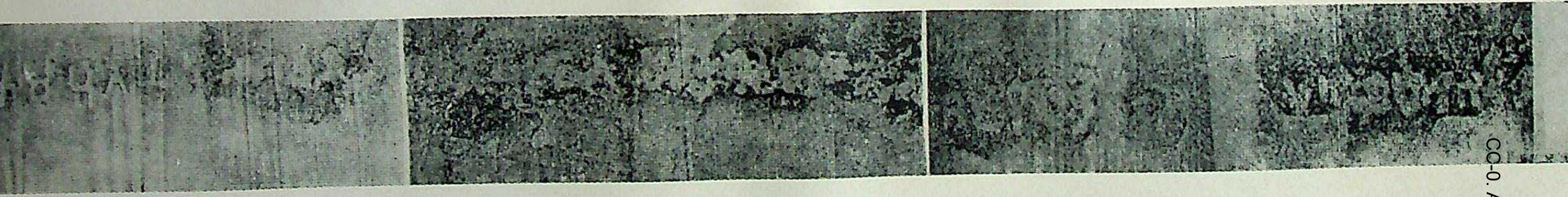

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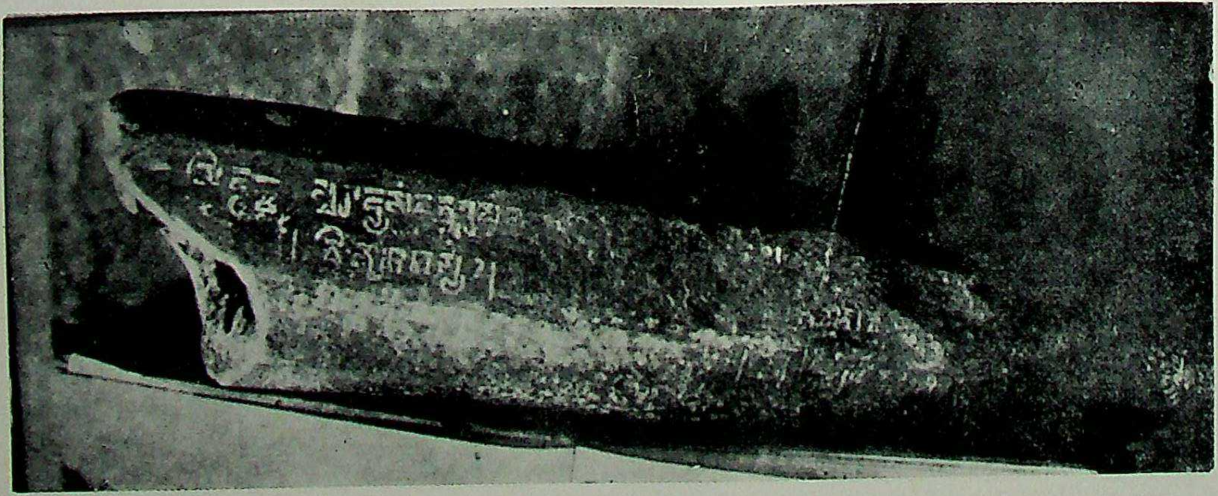

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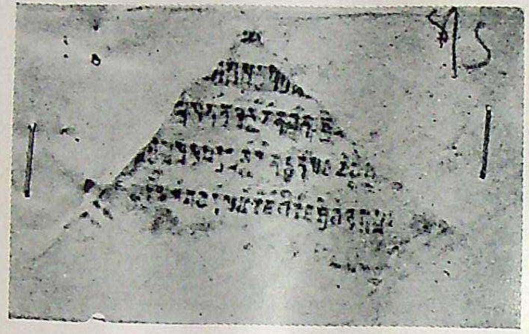

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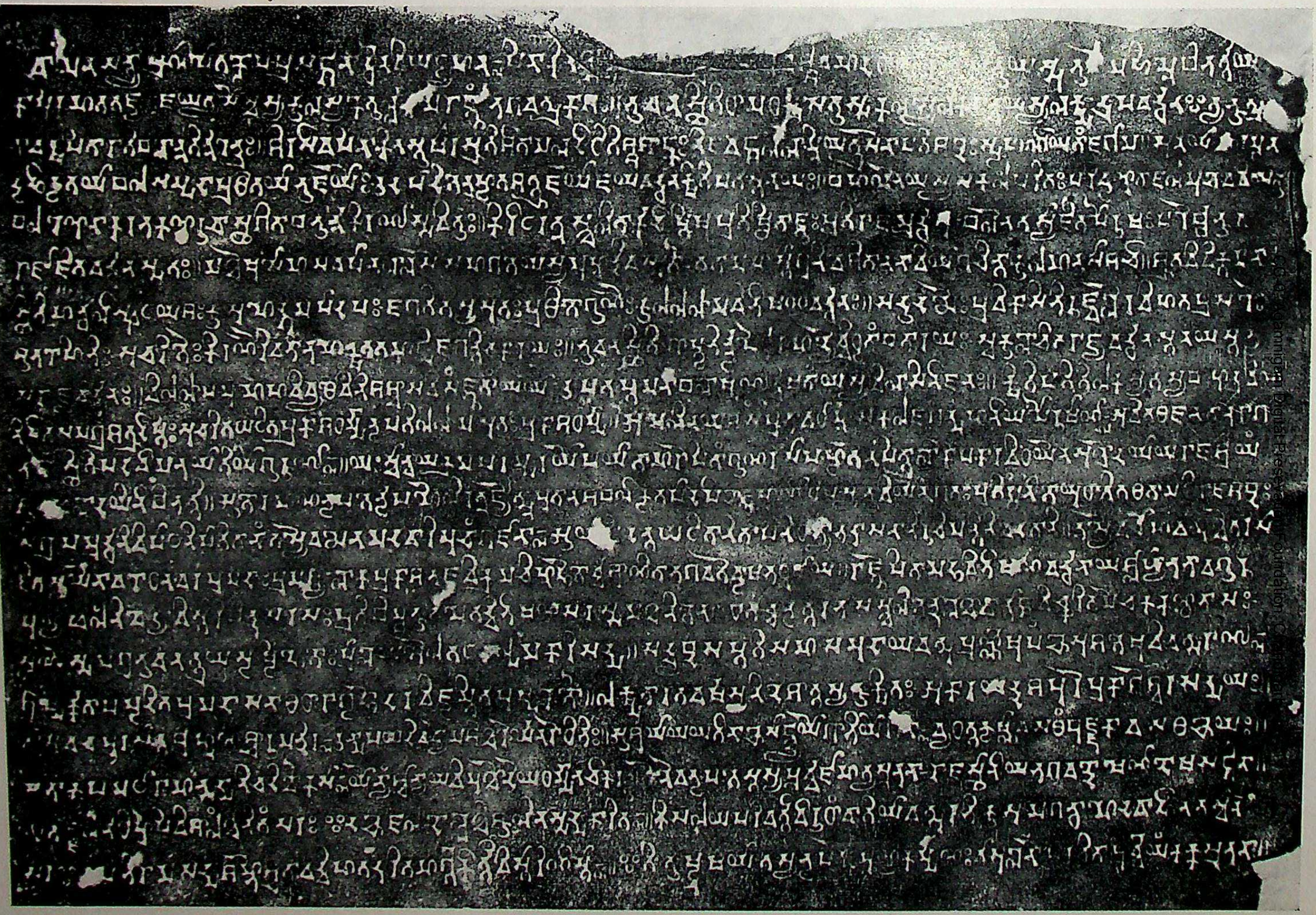

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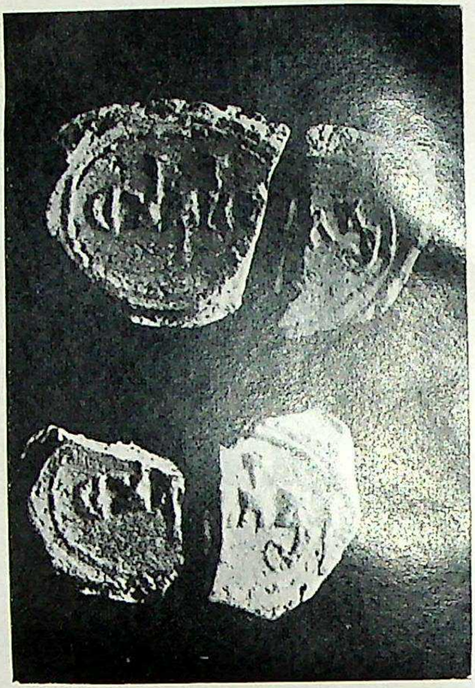

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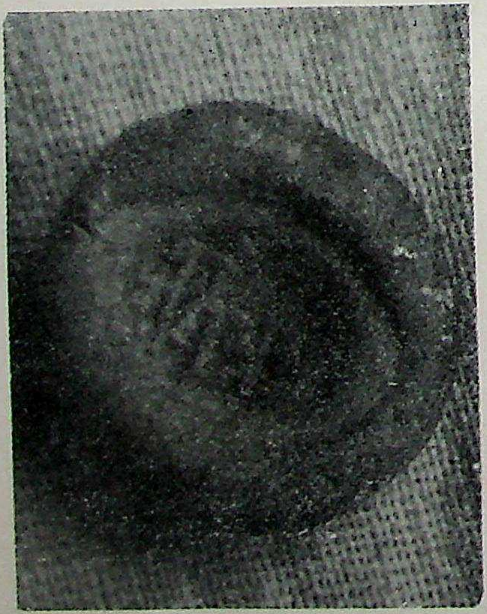

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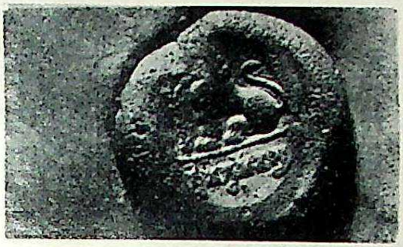

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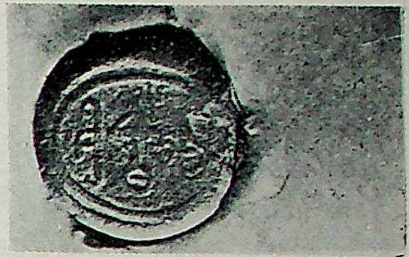

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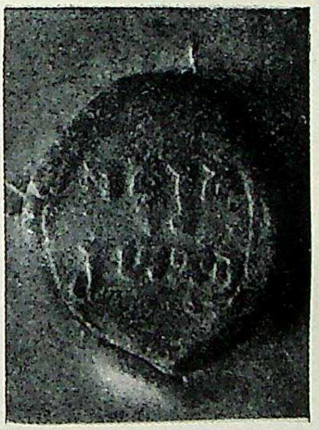

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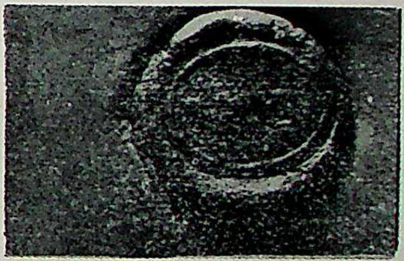

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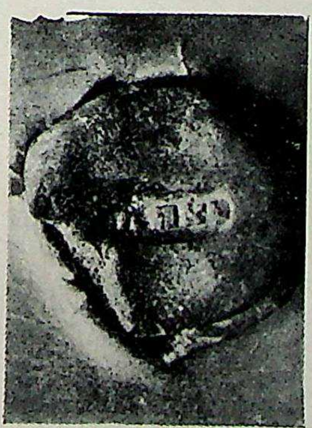

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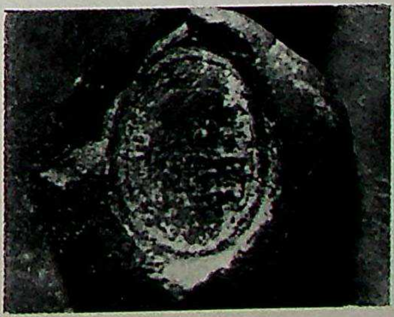
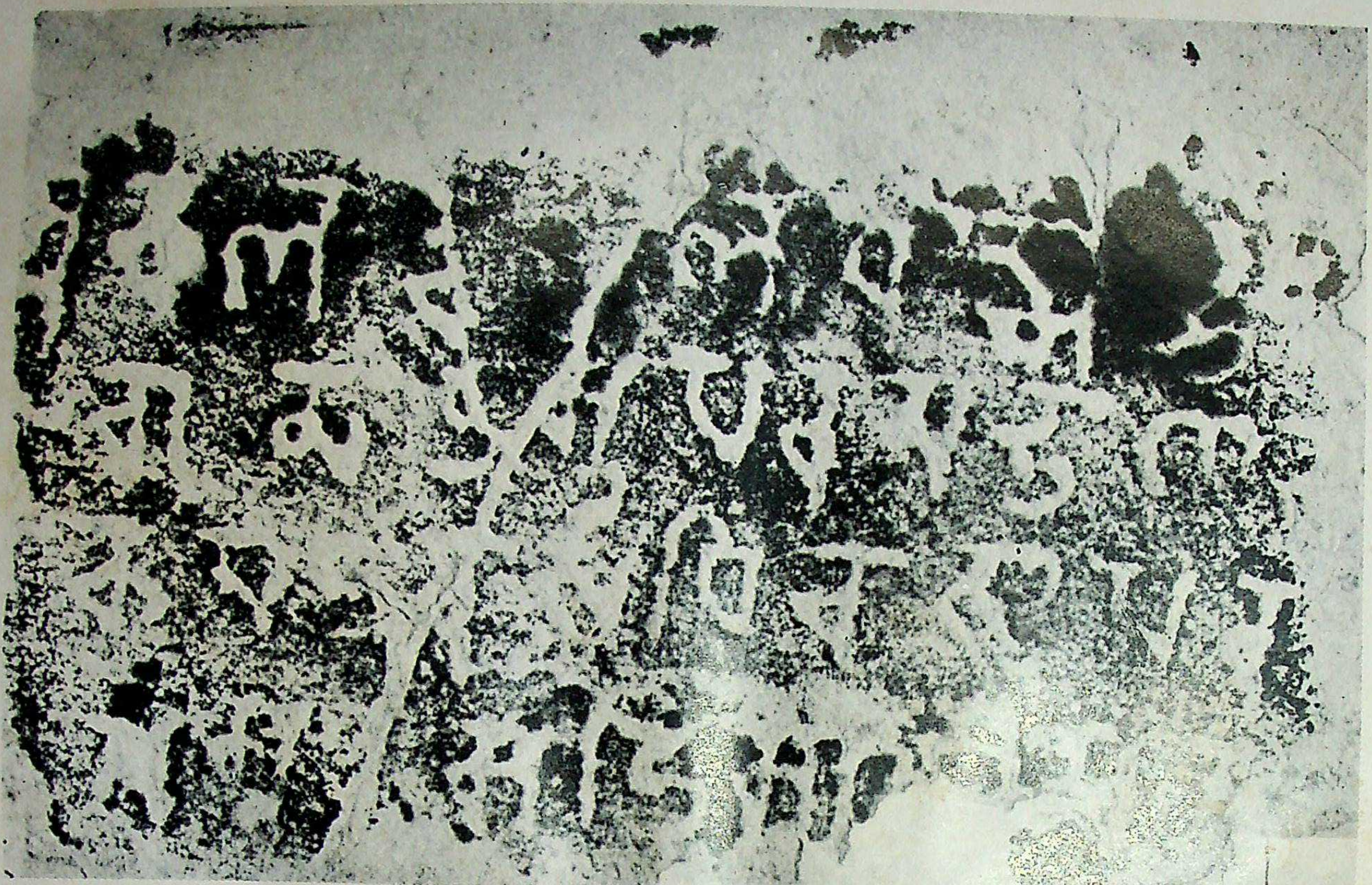


No. 4

7. Some Clay Sealings from Sunet.



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